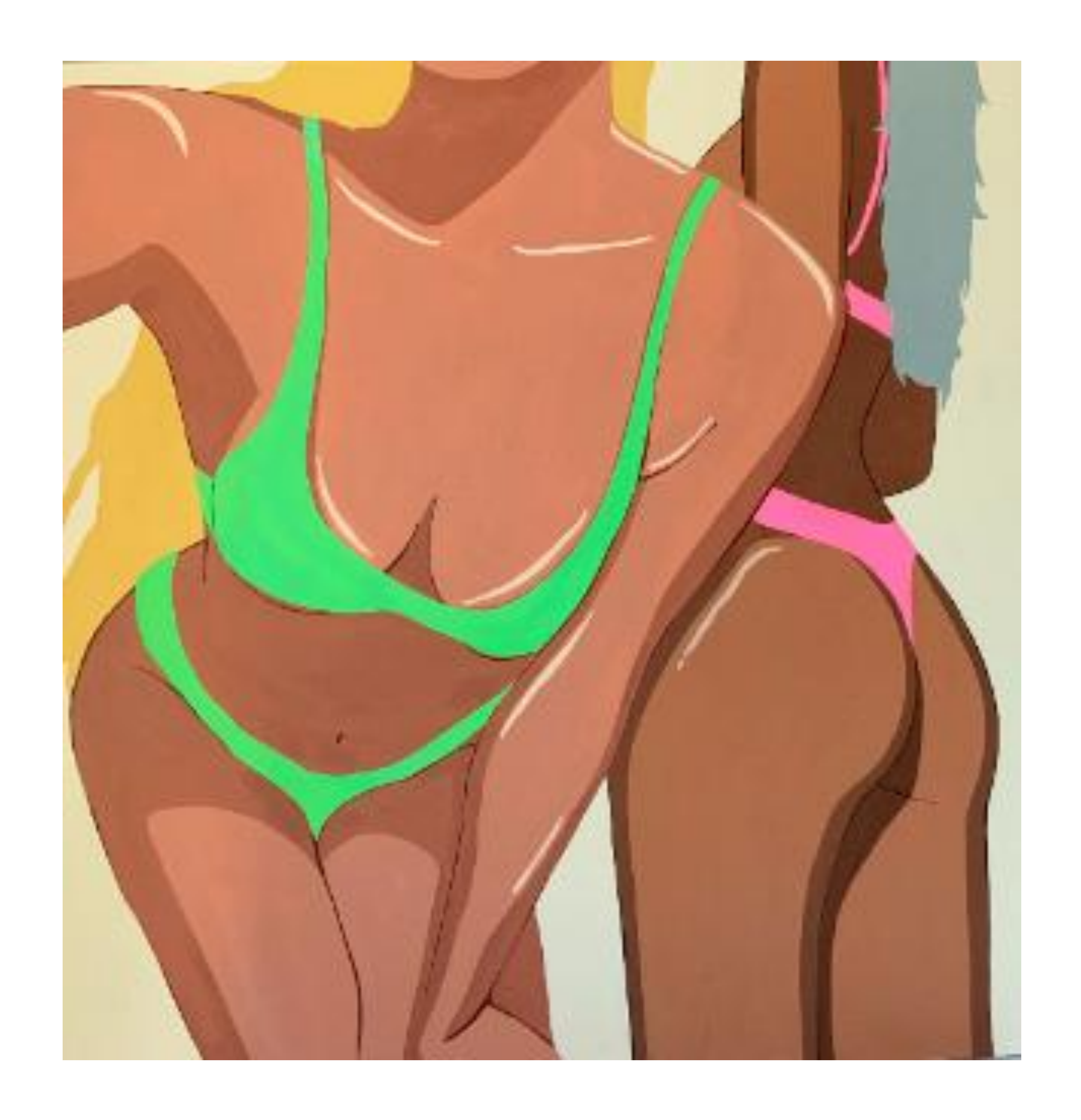
Art & Eros Magazine



Volume Six: Fall 2021

Art & Eros Magazine: Volume Six

Obelisk Press
Vancouver, BC, Canada

Cover picture: Two Swimmers by Hayeon Choi, Vancouver Artist

If you have a submission for the **Art & Eros Magazine** feel free to contact the magazine. The Editor-in-Chief can be contacted at

pbruskiewich @ gmail.com

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Art & Eros is Looking for Submissions

Obelisk Press of Vancouver is pleased to publish the fall 2021 edition ***Art & Eros Magazine*** which serves to feature the work of aspiring artists. ***Art & Eros Magazine*** welcomes submissions on a quarterly basis.

The Theme for the fall 2021 edition is *The Last of the Summer Sun*.

We are pleased to welcome our new **Cultural and Visual Art Editor** Ms. Hayeon Choi of Vancouver, and feature her interview and some of her West Coast Expressionist Art. We have also put together a special collection of colorized pictures of the infamous femme fatale Mata Hari and have included a script *The Many Loves of Mata Hari,* which was featured at her Centennial retrospective in 2017 in Mata Hari's home town in Holland.

Please feel free to submit your short stories, prose, poetry and artwork to

pbruskiewich @ gmail.com

There is no fee to submit. There is no writer's fee provided by the journal for those who submit. The publishing rights remain with the writer.

The Theme for the next edition of our Magazine is *The Many Joys of Winter*.

New Works of Art

An Interview of Hayeon Choi

[**Vancouver**, 8 September, 2021]

Patrick: The first question is what is your philosophy as an artist?

Hayeon: I like expressing myself. I feel most times I do choose to express myself.

Patrick: You do that in your art and you do that in other things as well.

Hayeon: yeah I think … just like my personality. I don't really tried to hide being being pissed off, or being sad or being upset … really.

Patrick: I noticed you like big canvases. Is that a reflection of your expression as well?

Hayeon: Yeah, I think so.

Patrick: As an artist do you think big?

Hayeon: I think i have like lots of big plans for my future.

Patrick: What are some of your long-term plans?

Hayeon: I want to make a lot of money. {laughing} I want to host big art shows and I want to have a big art business where I can travel the world. I want to be able gift big gifts to my friends and family. That's one of the things I look forward to in life.

Patrick: So friends and family are very important to you.

Hayeon: Yeah I think so

Patrick: When you were growing up and you were doing art is there one particular moment in your life where you realized you wanted to become an artist?

Hayeon: Actually when I was really young, instead of daycare my mom put me into an art daycare. So I've grown up doing art like painting. I was in pottery like for seven years, maybe. So I always did art and I just assumed that i was going to be an artist. I was going to go to art school so I was making a portfolio. But then that was just kind of like … I didn't really put much thought into it. I just thought like oh this is what I was supposed to be doing because I'm naturally good at it and everyone tells me that I should pursue art. But then in high school just got really boring for me and I hated it and i didn't find myself as a creative person so I didn't think I would thrive in art school and then so I just like completely ditched art and I didn't want anything to do with art.

Patrick: That was in high school …

Hayeon: Yeah and well near the end of high school applying and thinking about universities.

Patrick: So now that you have a Commerce degree in Marketing you now once again interested in wanting to do art. Is that because art is in your blood and in your soul?

Hayeon: Umm … I guess so i think i realized that I have developed a different understanding for art. I didn't know musicians were artists until a few years ago. When I thought artist, I thought just two-D. I didn't think of fashion designers as artists. I just thought of them as fashion designer. IO now understand that everything is art. Science is art. The way you live life is art. With your personality … to point … you can build your personality and you can sculpt it and that is also art. That's why I think I went back into it because.

Patrick: You have some friends who are performers … musician?

Hayeon: yeah

Patrick: Also you have done some fashion for some your friends Bathing suits in the St. Tropez style. They are very fashionable I have seen one or two pictures to be a bathing suit.

Hayeon: yeah.

Patrick: Instead of the bottoms being completely covered, you cover the intimate … and with the tops, you cover what has to be covered and not more, St. Tropez is a famous beach in southern France really wealthy and affluent go, when they want to walk the beach and be noticed. Many of your posted pictures are of bathing suits that they would want to wear.

Hayeon: Yeah .. like skimpy.

Patrick: Not skimpy … it is fashionable. Skimpy would be a single string covering the feminine. That would not be a good bathing suit. With the St. Tropez fashion, the bottom covers the feminine, while keeping the rest of the hips bare.

Hayeon: yeah

Patrick: Very French.

Hayeon: Something I have noticed … i would say … that North America more like liberal in a sense and Europe is still more conservative or whatever …

Patrick: In fashion?

Hayeon: In ,,, like … history. Europe has way more history and tradition not as much here but in like swim suits. I make a lot of thongs and really

cheeky underwear but then there are a lot of girls who are uncomfortable with it. In Europe they show way more skin. I thought it was interesting.

Patrick: French women have a very avant-garde sense of duty, and sense of self.

Hayeon: yeah

Patrick: Don't give up.

Hayeon: yeah

Patrick: You’re avant-garde. So let's see what else we can talk about. Your use of color! I notice you use bright colors. Tell me about your use of colors. They go very much with your West Coast Expressionist character of your paintings. Do you have a favorite color?

Hayeon: Pink is my favorite color. But I rarely wear pink or have owned pink things.

Patrick: What makes it your favorite color?

Hayeon: It has been my favorite color of mine since as long as I can remember. And it is so girly and classic and I just love it.

Patrick: Pink is my favorite color since my mother came home from the hospital with my little sister, with a pink nose, pink cheeks, pink ears and wrapped in a pink blanket. What is your least favorite color? Like … is black a color you have never used? What is a color you kind of find disturbing?

Hayeon. I don't think I have used like light colors. But I would like to. I don't think I have a color I dislike. Oh, actually, I think lime green is really hard to pull off.

Patrick: Do you like drawing or painting water?

Hayeon: Water is hard! Like water droplet or like a water bottle. Yeah I do like drawing water.

Patrick: Your West Coast Expression art relates directly to water. Many of them at the pool, almost like an odalisque. The languor the pleasantness

Hayeon: Yes …

Patrick: What are your immediate future plans? How will you go from today to where you want to be in a few years, with your art, art shows and traveling the world?

Hayeon: I really want to sell an original painting of mine. I've only sold print so far.

Patrick: Is that your goal for this year?

Hayeon: yeah i think it can happen. I also really want to move out. I am manifesting … moving out and I want to keep having fun. I actually think you can like partially control your life.   Like socializing. I think a part of me like hates fun. And I don't really allow myself to have fun.

Patrick: Why would you hate fun?

Hayeon: Because I see like a guilt trip …

Patrick: Is it because someone put his on your shoulders because someone else like your parents don’t want you to have fun.

Hayeon: yeah it definitely I think I've had more fun than my family.

Patrick: I am a Catholic boy who has never gone to a rock concert … why would you hate having fun?

Hayeon: I think … oh … I'm really lazy. I feel like being lazy and having fun but I'm not being productive.

Patrick: So it's more a question of being productive …

Hayeon: yeah … like am I disciplined enough.

Patrick: You are a young artist. You have lots of time.   I don't think you should feel guilty.

Hayeon: I'm learning to receive without guilt.

Patrick: We have a responsibility to other people family friends community whatever. We also have responsibilities to ourselves. you've just you've done kindergarten and twelve years of school or you will just completed a university degree about a year ago … that seventeen years of your life you have gone to school i can't imagine why a twenty something year old with not want to have fun.

Hayeon: Yeah

Patrick: how many of your friends have decided to travel the world instead of getting a job.

Hayeon: … not like too many I know some planned on it but Covid came along but even then it wasn't like Wing Wing who is not traveling for fun, but is getting her Master's

Patrick: When Covid is over are you planning to travel the world?

Hayeon: Yeah.

Patrick: Being an artist means that where ever you are is your studio.

Hayeon: Um … I think Europe would be fine.

Patrick: What parts of Europe? are you going to do the traditional Florence, Rome and Paris or would you do the backwaters.

Hayeon: Where are the backwaters?

Patrick: Like maybe Prague?

Hayeon: Oh, I heard Prague is really nice, and inexpensive. I don't know, like, I plan on being a successful artist. I plan on making lots of memories with my friends and i plan on living a really good life but i don't have like smaller plan to accomplish that.

Patrick: You're giving that some thought aren't you?

Hayeon: yeah

Patrick: It's good to have the big goals, because once you have the big goals, you then can figure out the little goals … if you have the little goals how do you end up with the big goals?

Hayeon: Plans don't work for me. I find them so restricting and then I just like don't follow through anyway.

Patrick: How is it restricting?

Hayeon: If I make a plan go out with a friend on Friday, like today's Wednesday … and then another friend invites me to something else that sounds more fun … that's restricting.

Hayeon: I like kind of not knowing what is going to happen.

Patrick: You like that kind of uncertainty?

Hayeon: yeah I love uncertainty. And I love like … risk …

Patrick: Are you someone who will go straight down the hill on a snowboard or do you slalom down the hill?

Hayeon: um I do the easy routes super fast.

Patrick okay … so you like risk. What is it about risk that you like? Is it the adrenaline?

Hayeon: I love adrenaline. {giggle}

Patrick: are you an adrenalin junkie?

Hayeon: Um to a degree. I think like most times risk isn't even risk. I think unless you're hurting yourself or someone else or like it could put you in a lot of financial debt, the risk you are thinking of isn't even a risk.

Patrick: It is interesting that you mention this because when I look at your art I see someone who is at the edge of risqué. Do you stay on the edge of conventional or do you do the unconventional?

Hayeon: {pause} What's the conventional?

Patrick: The conventional would be draped. The unconventional would be undraped. Have you ever done a painting of a female figure?

Hayeon; Like female naked?

Patrick: Yes …

Hayeon: Umm … not naked. I don't think I would do naked yet like i was thinking about it like i don't know how to paint a nipple. {Giggle}

Patrick: There is only one way to find … it is to give it a try.

Hayeon: yeah i was actually thinking like underwear, but the underwear is like a skin tone or a you know a variation of skin tone.

Patrick: I know you have done one painting of the male from the back. The conventional would be to have people sitting there fully clothed happy with a glass of wine. Unconventional would be *sans habillement*.

Hayeon: Ah ha

Patrick Unconventional would be *Dejeuner sur l'herbe* with two women in partial attire and two men fully attired. Unconventional would be the same painting with the women attired and the men *sans habillement*. let's think of one more question.

Hayeon: a last question…

Patrick: What do you feel when you paint? Are you very happy when you paint?

Hayeon: A good question …{pause} I feel like I'm solving a puzzle … how to you make it to my liking … aesthetically pleasing. Just even making the color I think which colors to add in which quantity. I don't know and which line should go where. In my paintings I separate the highlights and then the shadow.

Patrick: There is your painting of a woman. She's leaning towards you and she has black hair and she is almost like a panther. Is this what you're saying?

Hayeon: oh I didn't even think that had a subtlety yeah i do remember that it was more thinking more like I'm like the ones with the two faces or with the two bodies. Umm if you look at a photo and the shadows … where do I decide to start the shadow or like which shadows do I lump together. Stuff like that.   i feel like that is like piecing a puzzle together.

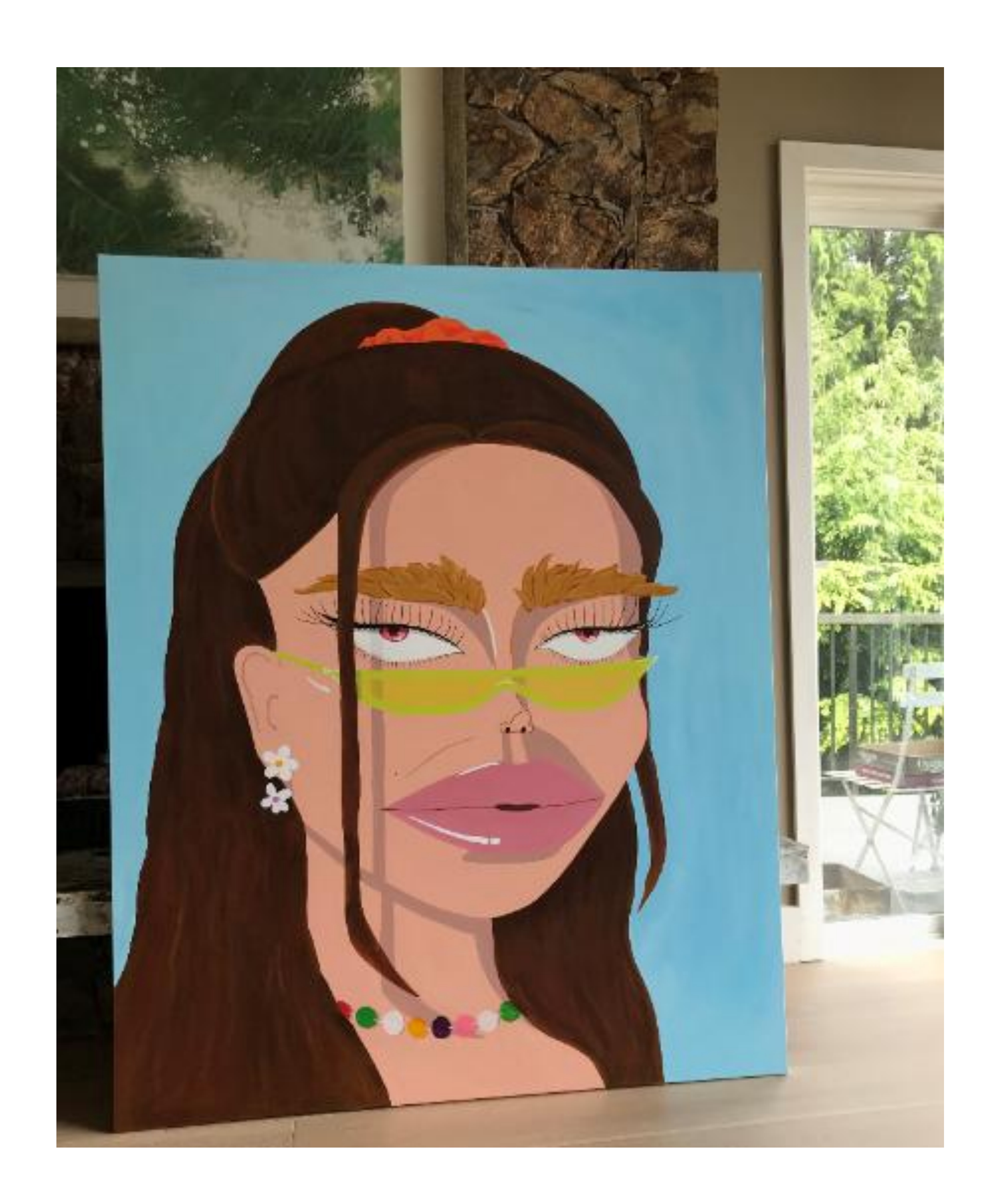
Patrick: I can see a lot of thought in your paintings, and the balance of things. That's wonderful. Thank you for your interview Hayeon.

Hayeon: You're welcome …

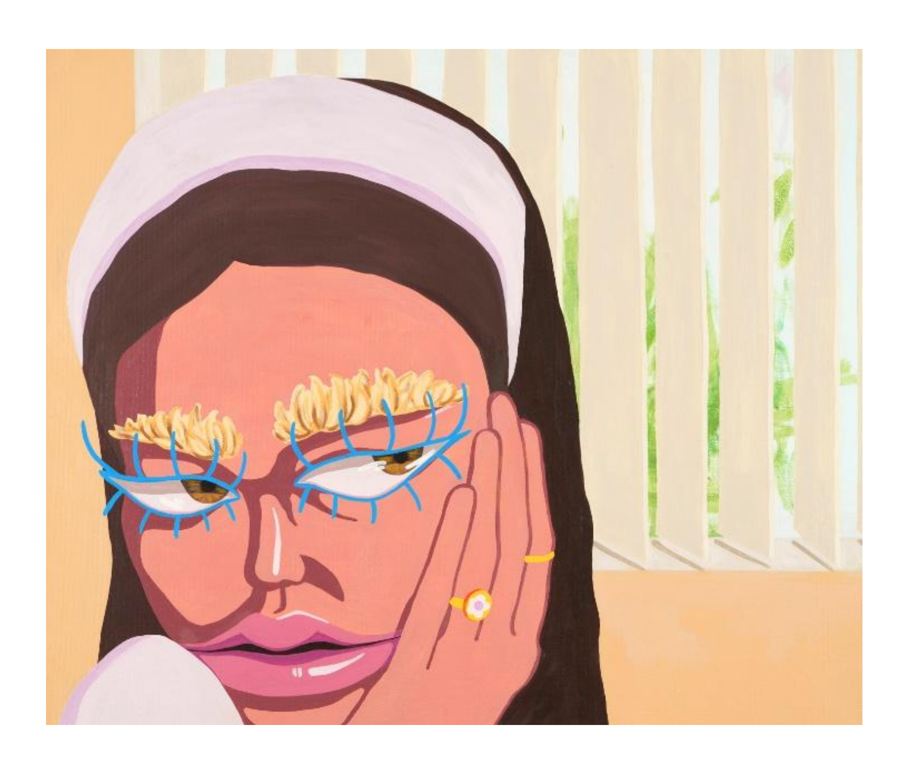
Art Work by Hayeon Choi

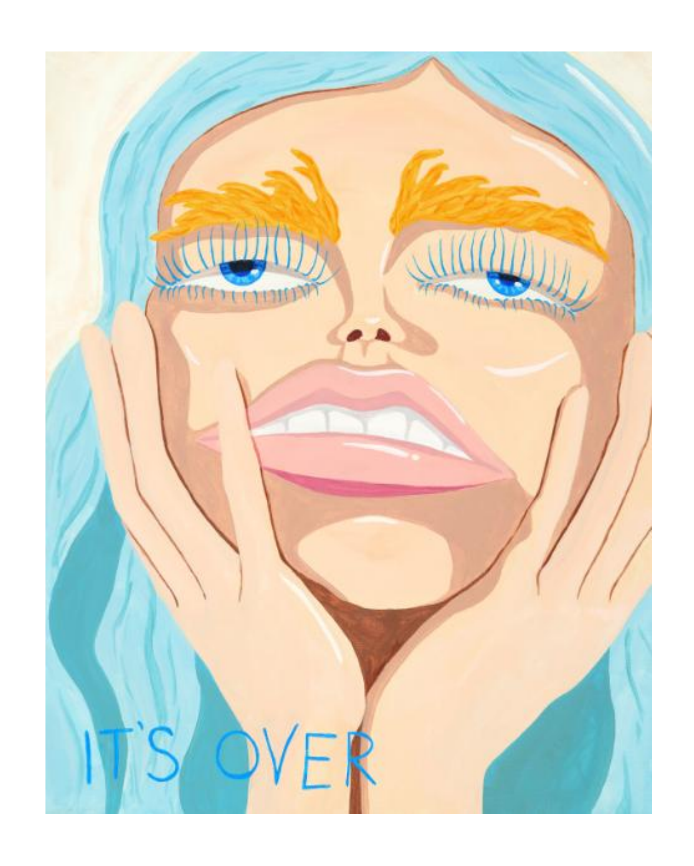


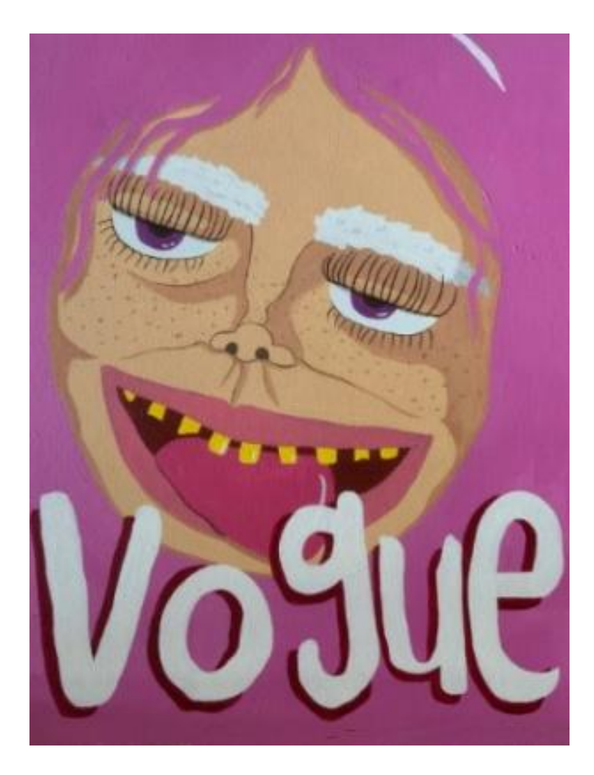









IT'S OVER


Vogue



Oh … I'm a Minimalist …



Photography is About Telling a Story by Righ Knight

Photography for me isn't just about taking a picture, like many photographers before me, it's about telling a story.

There's so many 'guru's' out there, who claim their tips/tricks are the ones you need to 'level up' your content. Yet, so many underappreciated and underrepresented living masters exist with little to no recognition like Andy Gotts.

My work is built upon my own philosophy which is comprised of two pillars: Objectivity and Permanence.

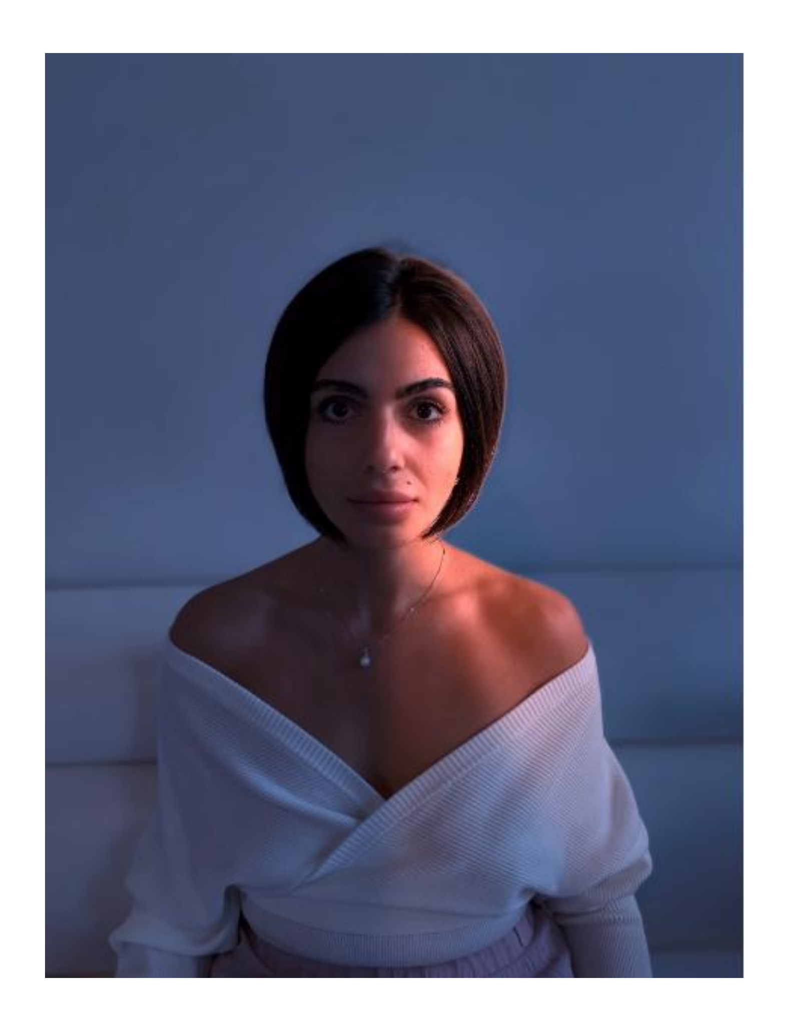
Lighting is a huge factor for photography but so is the rest of your equipment, it's a principle of expert photography, not a philosophy. The importance of light is rarely over emphasized but it is droll.

Everyone talks about light, let's give you a different lens.

Permanence is giving the subject of your work, immortality, like a painting or a novella.

It is the semblance of knowledge and mastery of so many disciplines that makes a true master such an elusive category.

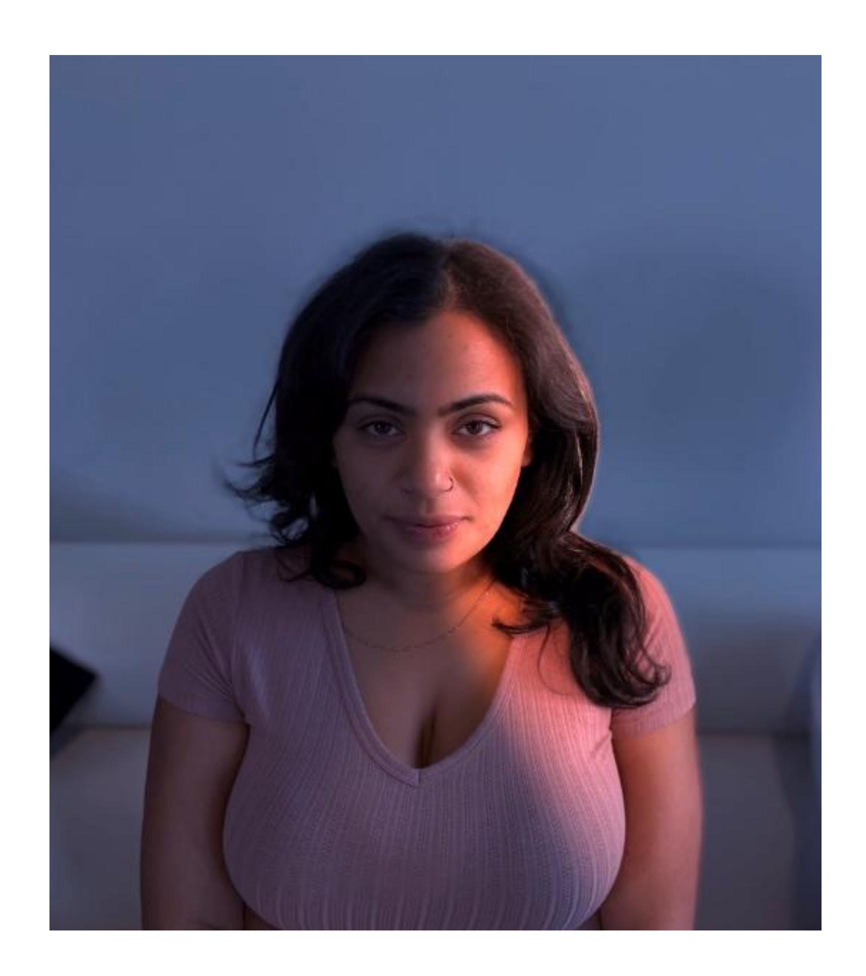
Many people try the unique, unusual or even the shocking to confuse, horrify and make uncomfortable the critics and complacent snobs. To put it mildly, art that doesn't inspire an evocation of emotion is lacking the very basic fundamentals of art itself.



Provocation of emotion.

Many artists think this way, including Michelangelo, Picasso and others.

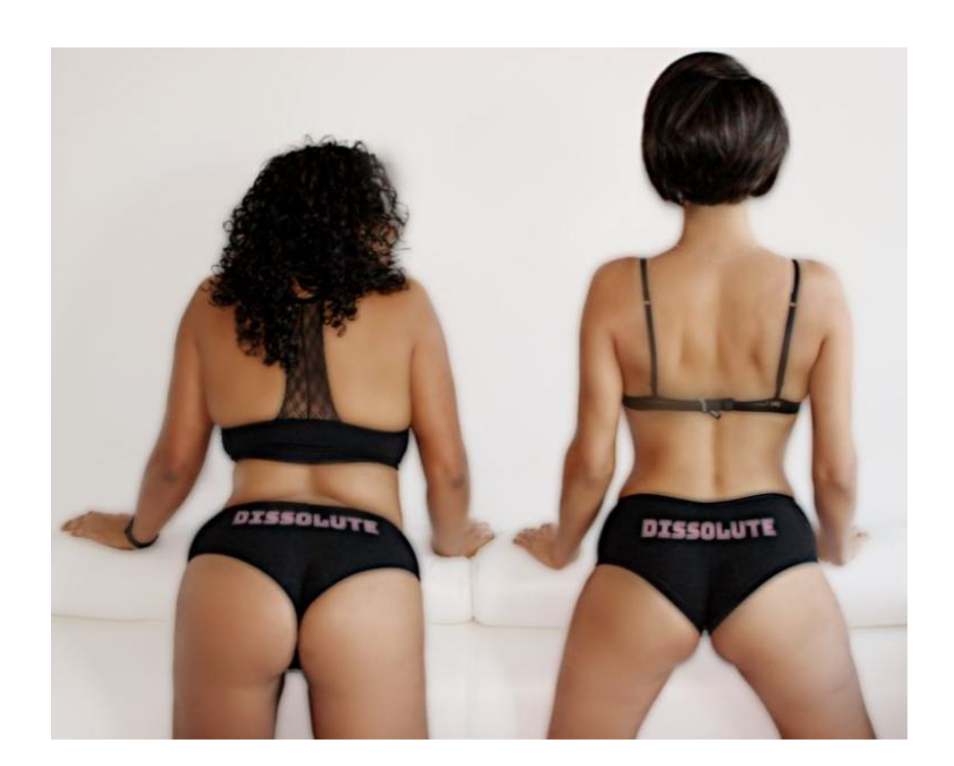
Some would rather create something horrid people would outcry as 'ugly' rather than fade into obscurity. We read a lot of cultivating an audience and keeping them guessing, remarkably in Robert Greene's the 48 laws of power, these concepts are explored thoroughly as different archetypes throughout history, minted as different styles of generating word-of-mouth and subtle calls-to-action, and very few artists properly cultivate this Warhol type of magnetism. Very few master the secondary ability of marketing, and would be better served with an agent / curator with their best interests in mind.



Artists who develop a symbiotic relationship with galleries and those in the business are better served through gossip than networking, we see this

through-out the art world, whether it's the French renaissance, or a modern coffee shop, the most talked about artists are those who take up the 'mental real estate' of the devoid enthusiast, once you familiarize your audience with your work, you become a 'name-drop' of those in the know.

That is the secondary aspect of permanence, the ability to create a long-lasting bond with your clients and audience, the ability to be a front-of-mind name that people will avidity associate with your work, that your work must be able to stand not only on it's own, but the test of time.



That is true mastery. That is the epitome of permanence, is to be a figure-head of what is attributed the 'golden standard', these goal posts are fleeting, yet Da Vinci's Mona Lisa will always be regarded as a masterpiece, because

it's not just the execution of these principles, it's the mastery of the techniques that is required.

True mastery is to make the impossible look effortless.

Objectivity is just as hard to define, it's beyond turning a blind eye to your own expectations and biases. It's also examining your own discretion and inattention.

Measuring your inattentability is a hard task, often we over emphasize our effectiveness.

Part of being objective is to allow your knowledge to work in your favour and play to your strengths.

Knowledge isn't just about knowing, it's about knowing your limitations and being aware of your ineffectiveness. We are inherently designed to ignore these blind-spots in our own abilities, the knowledgeable students, who are aware how much they don't know, play on their skills and instincts to overcome self-doubt, but true mastery of objectivity is about consultation, it's about bridging that gap with other minds/expertise to fill your own.

What is true in photography also transcends other disciplines, when taking a photo, what is in front of your lens, is never going to change, it's always going to look like what it is.

Sometimes that's good, sometimes that's bad.

That's where objectivity comes in, you can manipulate your environment to better suit your range of capture. Or what's directly in front of your lens, you can use your knowledge of lighting, shadow and lenses to change the appearance of your subject.

Then there is technique, that's things like after-effects, angling, aperture, texture, contrast etc that affect your finished product.

Being objective is subjective that's why input is imperative.

Never kneel to your critics, mind you, I mean constructive criticism, adding to your knowledge base and viewing different aspects of your work or project.

A lot of artists get deterred when referencing their own works, to the works of masters and that is a fatal attitude.

You shouldn't aspire to be the next Rembrandt or Mozart or Ansel Adams (whatever your discipline in art is) you should be inspired to be yourself and let your own style stand amongst the giants on its own, the masters are 'the gold standard' but that doesn't mean there isn't room for another 'gold standard', the greats are benchmarks of greatness, they are not the greatest.

You have to be able to stand in your own light, but on the shoulders of giants.

You incorporate the right elements into your art, you give hints and whispers of your perfection of those abating attributes that are time-tested and consumer-approved.

Not taking the safe path, far from it, but you want to breathe life into your work and some semblance of identity.

You have to make your work identifiable, and synonymous with the culture of your audience.

Disney did this charmingly with borrowed stories he animated, and cultivate a culture of nurturing, love and fantasy in his work, which encapsulated the identity of his work, therefore captivating audiences.

In a recent photo shoot for my brand, I wanted a sultry and seductive theme, blended with the spirit of what my brand represents. Dissolute quite literally translates to a lack of morality.

But to me it means so much more, I believe it's the heart and soul of rebellion. Dissolute is the marriage of pleasure and rebellion, it's the spirit of defiance of the 'norm'.

Complacency is where spirit dies, I wanted an out-side-the-box approach to my work.

The erotic is daring because it is taboo; but also because we crave the daring, we crave the bold. Boldness is a kind of double-edged sword in the sense that some people desire bluntness, whilst some people dread it.

Dissolute is about being beyond those qualities, about giving into our basic natures and about feeding our desires.

We have natural animalistic instincts that are provoked upon seeing the human form, we are slaves to our senses. If you can paint a peach so juicy you want to pick it, or a car so nice you can picture yourself driving it, that's another form of provocation.

Provocation of emotion is the spirit of art, and through my art I am able to touch on those subtle factors, it's also more raw and real than that, it's also about giving people what they expect, what they've seen a million times before, but through your personal lens, people want to see the world the way you see it, give them a window into your soul.

This is about the evolution of you and your art, your journey is unique just like your story is unique. Whatever your medium, your art is an extension of you in a way.

Although the 'tried-and-true' method often leads to roads well-traversed, you can still carve your own path inside a world that's been sterilized with glass towers and roads to everywhere.

We are aware that 'sex sells' but it's more than sex, it's the illusion of and lusting after sex that's intriguing, sex is easy and abundant in this day and age, but everyone wants to be desired. That's in-essence why immortalizing the character of your subject is so important, it's beyond objectifying a person down to only their physical characteristics it's about reaching into that's person's soul and bringing forward the emotion behind their own personality. If you can find the dark parts of a person they'd rather keep hidden, and shinning light on them, then it's about taking those raw, personal and intimate aspects of ourselves and baring them before the world.

You often hear some men in this line of work praising themselves for not being a Weinstein or Cosby type of individual. Well that's all well and good, it's not something that you brag about or aspire to be, you just don't take advantage of people, period.

Consent is key and it's an underrated aspect of operating as a male in a world that's female facing, you'll see men working behind the scenes, and many times I've worked with models who are 18/19 and new to the industry, who will say things to me like 'My parents don't know I am here right now', or 'I didn't tell anyone where I was going'.

As a father of 3 daughters this horrifies me, as a rebellious youth myself, I identify with the hustle, and respect an adults right to not inform their parents of every detail of your life.

But I always encourage and educate the need for safety, many of these girls are looking for modeling jobs on craigslist and backstage and so on, going to these various locations and meeting people, many times without even asking for the name of or information about whom they are meeting. I educate models on sharing their location information with a close friend, via snapchat or facebook services. About the duration of their intended photo/videoshoot and at the very least the phone number of the ad you responded to.

And any young person getting into the industry the best advice I can give you, is to utilize the internet to research who you are meeting and exercise caution especially when you're alone.

Hoping for the best, and preparing for the worst is a good philosophy, because we never truly know someone else's intentions.

We make Faustian bargains with our fate all the time without realizing it, we cross the street assuming that driver that's turning will see us and slow down, this too plays to the theme of inattention. It's really about being able to self-assess when we are out of our depth or comfort zone so that's really going to vary depending on the person and their experience level.

Socially, many people look down upon those with less discretion than themselves.

It's a polarizing industry, with many larger than life personalities. It's the type of industry where you can run all day, but never move an inch. Where you can bleed, someone else's blood and never lose a drop. Where you can live someone else's life, but never walk a mile in their shoes. Of course modeling in and of itself requires some basic acting skills. So being a photographer is also about giving direction and teaching.

When shooting food for example, one can say 'move this over' or 'more sauce' or anything pertaining to the food itself, or they can give the reasoning behind the direction.

It's more about coaching than telling people what to do, in my view.

I find that most people respond better if you explain the 'why' behind the 'do'.

In my professional career I've been a restaurant manager and it's the same with your crew, you have many hats to wear. It's not just making sure the numbers look good, it's encouraging people and boosting morale, it's being involved with your team and giving them all the information they need to know they are doing their job right.

There's a concept when it comes to raising kids, I personally have 5 children, but one thing you learn as a parent is to 'catch them when they're good', too often we scold people for their mistakes, when mistakes happen, it's the positive reinforcement of good behaviour and good habits you want to drive home.

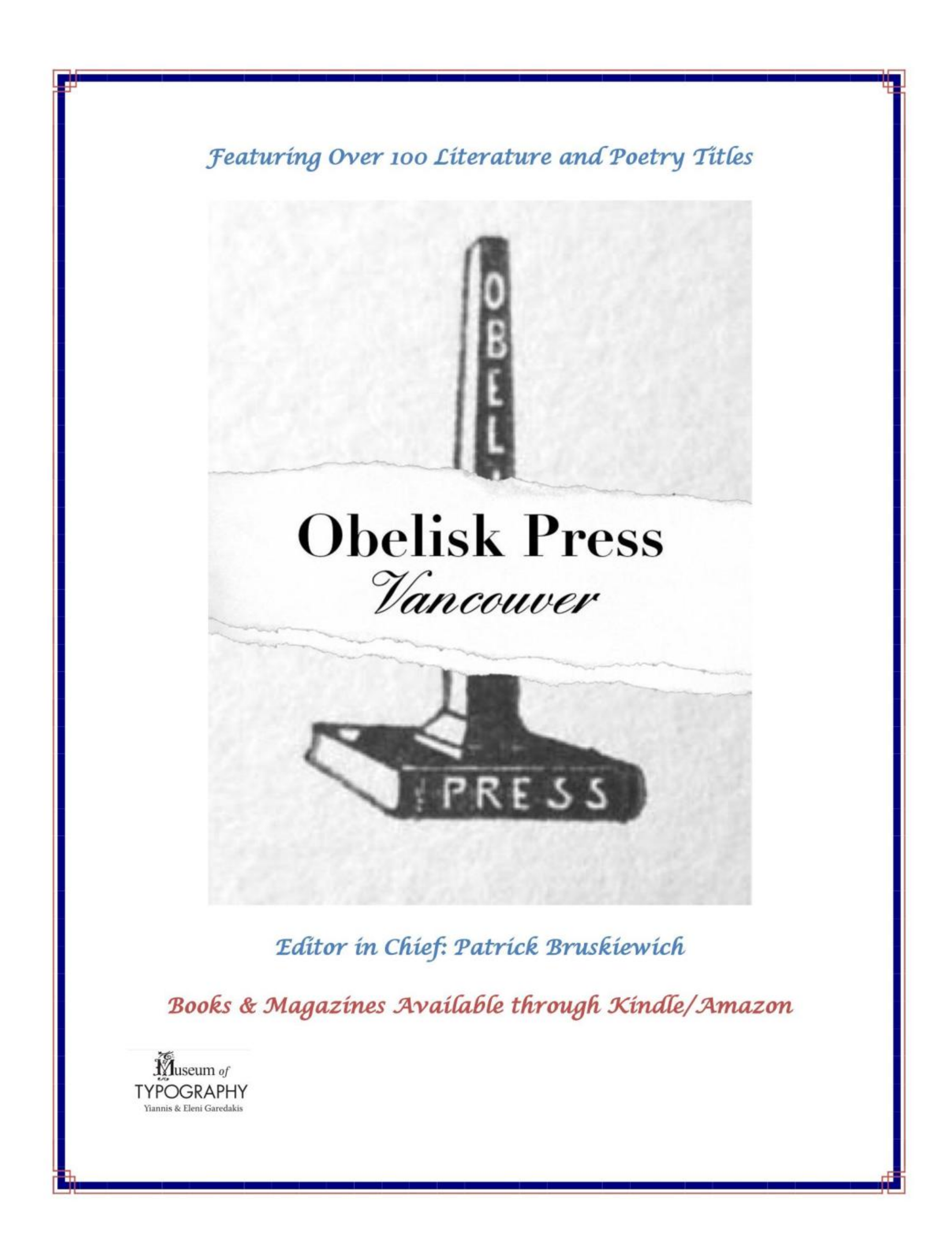
It's all about building up those good actions and good habits so someone knows what is expected of them, and not to stress so much, the stress is a big factor, especially for photography.

If someone is stressed, in fear, scared, sad, worried, etc. it will show on the face.

Flattery will get you everywhere. In our modern day and age, recognition is so underrated as a form of disarming someone's fear and combating their stress. Complimenting someone on something that is not superficial (not appearance/attire/etc.) give an honest compliment about a decision that person has made for example.

So I think in summary the best advice I can give is to be humble and genuine in your interactions with people in this industry, or even just generally in life. You don't need to be an expert to reach out or even research masterful tips, and always practice. Experience is *King* and consistency is *Queen*, however character reigns supreme.

Submission to a Poster Contest in the European Union



{an Intercompetition.com Art submission call}

New Prose

Confessions of a Teenage Arsonist by Robert Wexelblatt

The trouble began when Uncle William took an old chest of drawers on the Antiques Roadshow. A smartly-dressed woman from New York City ran her fingers over it greedily, smiling like a well-stoked pothead.

“This is truly magnificent, sir. A treasure. The finest example I’ve ever seen of Rhode Island block-front. Any idea of the age of the piece? No? Well it was made around 1780, at the time of the American Revolution. Do you know anything about John Goddard? No? Well, John Goddard, of Newport, is considered the first American craftsman to build block-front furniture. Notice how the contour of the piece’s front is made by three blocks: the middle one concaves, the outer two convex ...”

She then grandly pegged its value at around $18,000—“at auction.” They always say “at auction.” I think it’s to cover their tails. I mean, the expert didn’t say she’d give Uncle William 18 grand for it, dovetails, scrollwork and all. Anything can happen at an auction where fools can bid as well as connoisseurs. Anyway, that whole show exists to exhibit the astonished faces of your neighbors, to hear stuff like “You’re joking,” and “Oh, My God, and we’ve been letting the children climb all over it.” Sure, once in a while they’ll throw in a dud. “I’m sorry to say it’s not Meissen but a souvenir of the 1939 World’s Fair at Flushing Meadows, New York.” They need the contrast; moreover, it’s entertaining to humiliate some avaricious idiot who’s expecting his putative porcelain to pay for a year’s medical coverage and a yacht.

When I say the trouble began what I really mean is the feud, the vendetta. According to my mother, William "just *took* that chest" after Nana had to give up the old Victorian and move to Assisted Living. "He had his *pick*," she snarled, "his pick." That Uncle William picked that chest hadn't seemed to bother her before Antiques Roadshow, though. In fact, I remember she once referred to it as "that hideous huge dark thing with the bulge." Her own taste ran to the clean, dull lines of what she called "Danish modern." She always stressed the Danish part, I think, as if Denmark were so up-to-date it had just been invented. "I need *light*," she'd say passionately, like a Manichean or a sunflower.

It wasn't as if Uncle William put the thing up for auction and pocketed $18,000. No, he held on to the chest. He actually liked it. He was proud of it and thought it an heirloom. He wanted to keep it in the family. It was also something he had to remind him of his mother. I pointed all this out to Mom, but it was as if I'd lit a two-inch fuse to a bundle of dynamite; she went off fast. "And what do *I* have? The jewelry that that wife of his didn't want."

"That's not true," I said reasonably. "You chose first and, anyway, we've got lots of Nana's things. Dishes and silverware and those compote things. And what's with calling Aunt Janice 'that wife of his'?"

"Don't be so fresh," Mother barked. "Oh, the *mouth* you've got on you—and taking his side …"

At this point my older sister Beth, who, being preoccupied with her college applications, paid less attention to all this than I did, stuck in her oar. “But it’s true, Mom.”

“*Et tu?* Oh, how sharper than a serpent’s tooth,” Mother quoted. She tended to come out with Shakespeare when she was worked up because she’d been in the Drama Club at Bryn Mawr. When we were younger and more obedient, she used to make us all read Shakespeare together. Beth and I hated it—and I’m still pretty immune to bardolatry—but Father went along, if he couldn’t come up with a ready excuse. He took directions and corrections to his diction with cheerful equanimity. Beth and I used to think he was cowed but then we realized it was just that his life was elsewhere: tennis, golf, business. It was easier for him to go along, within unstated limits. So in the matter of “the Goddard Chest,” as Mother took to calling it, Dad punted. He wouldn’t discuss it. When she got wound up he’d just leave the room or turn on the TV or tactically fall asleep.

“Well,” said Beth when we discussed his avoidant behavior, it’s always been his method, hasn’t it?”

“Not sure. Actually, his usual method’s just to agree,” I observed.

“True. But this is different. She’s *obsessed*. How much raving you figure he’s had to listen to that we haven’t?”

“Eww. Lucky thing we’ve got all this homework.”

"And college applications."

We giggled.

"And texting." Beth made her mother face. "What do you read, my Lord? Icons, icons, icons."

"OMG. LOL."

"Seriously, this thing with Uncle William seems to have driven her right up to the edge."

"It's sibling rivalry," I said authoritatively, hot from a two-week unit on psychology. "It's obvious. I mean the chest's a symbol. That Uncle William has it means Nana loved him more."

"Or that he loved *her* more," Beth added subtly.

I shrugged. "Or … or maybe it's just the 18,000 bucks. And the getting on TV."

"She can be petty."

"But she's ours."

"And Dad's."

"Dad's not here much."

"And next year I'll be away at college."

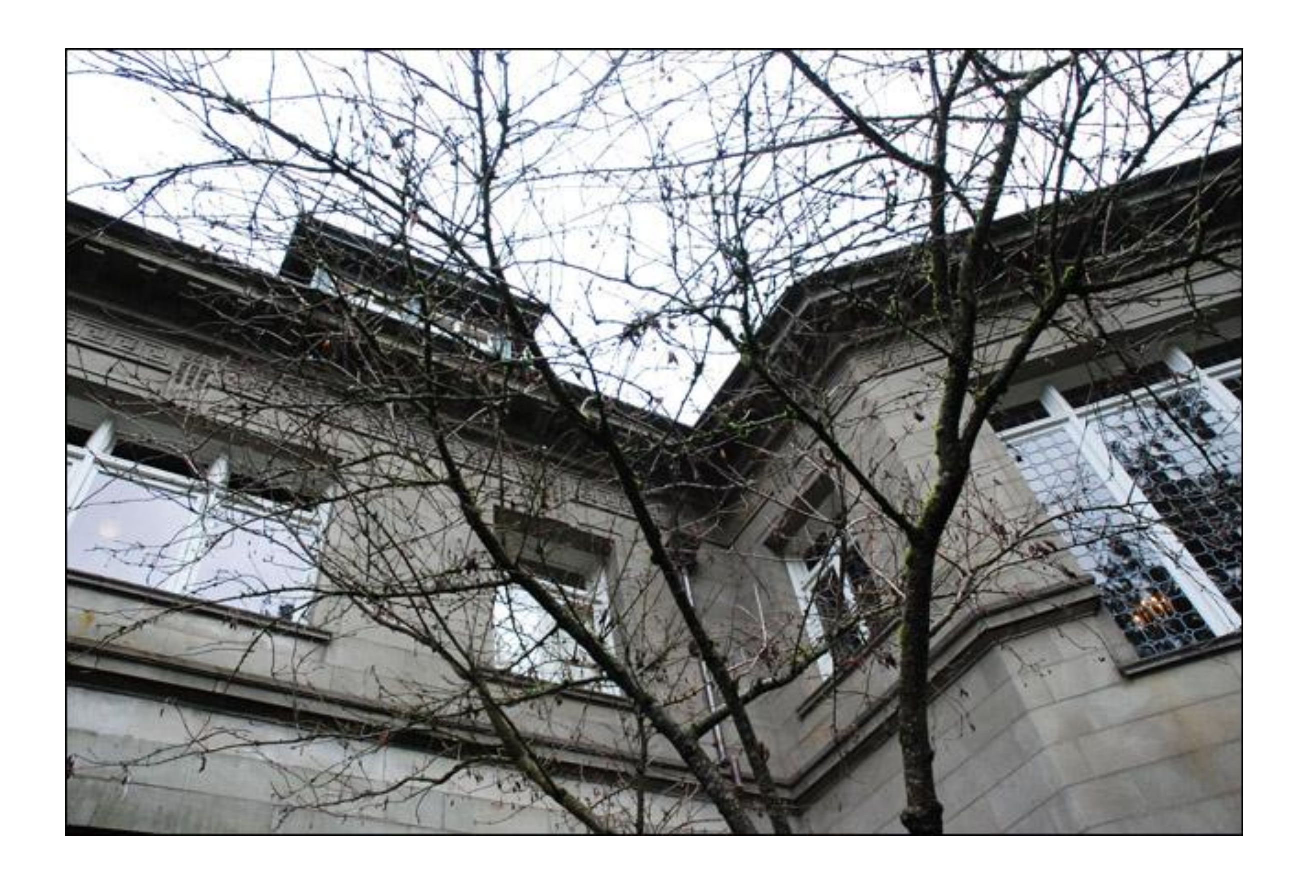
"Yikes! Don't remind me."

Beth took my hand as if to say, "Let's never be like them." We'd always been close. "A pair of confederates," Mother called us. Seeing the way she and her brother were behaving made us want to fortify our alliance.

Beth was 17 and, though I was only 15, she let me vet her boyfriends. I didn't have a boyfriend yet, if you don't count Freddy DeMaria, who had a crush on me and rode his bike up and down our street every day for two weeks but was too shy to say anything and gave up when he caught sight of Beth and me giggling behind the living room window. After that, it was like I had the plague.

For my sister and me the worst consequence of the feud was that we didn't see our cousins, Seth and Brian. Though they lived 40 minutes away and went to a private school, it was rare that two weeks went by without a family cookout at either their place or ours. Seth was a year older than Beth and they liked each other a great deal. Their names rhymed. As for Brian, he and I were born two days apart on the same floor of the same hospital. The boys could act like jerks, of course, but that was seldom and even then probably

more hormones than character. We loved them like brothers, which Beth remarked on when we hadn't seen or heard anything from them in three weeks.



"You don't think they're mad at us, do you? Don't they miss us?" I wondered.

Beth grinned. "I guess they'd have called if Seth didn't have a new girlfriend who, by the way, is sweet and pretty and named Sylvie. Then Brian's pretty much all about lacrosse these days, isn't he?"

Preppies," I said the way I'd say it to Brian when I wanted to tease him. He'd snap back, "Townie," and give me a light punch on the arm.

So we called them up.

Seth apologized, saying, "We've been wanting to call. We're as exasperated by this crap as you are."

"It's so incredibly *stupid*," Beth said.

I took the phone. "Our dad's kind of checked. What's your mom have to say?"

There was a pause. "It may be a little harder at this end."

"Meaning?"

"Well, your mother did sort of start it so Dad feels it's up to her to end it, nothing he can do. Mom told him just to send her the damned chest."

"Really? She said *that*? You *heard* her?"

"Yep. We were all eating dinner together. But Dad said that would only make things worse."

When I told Beth what Seth said she took the phone back. "He's probably right. Mom would only say he was showing off how much richer he is than we are. You never heard the way she went on when you guys transferred to Whitemarsh."

"I guess it goes back a long way."

"Long way, yeah. That's what we think, too. Pre-*us*."

I grabbed the phone. "So. . . so what do we *do*? I mean, we've made our speeches already."

"Well, we do have a kind of wild idea, but I really need to think it through."

"What is it?"

"Look. Gotta run. I'll call you in a couple of days, okay? I promise. At night. Say, 10:30."

Beth and I filled each other in on what we'd missed then stared glumly at each other, cross-legged on her bed.

"Not altogether satisfactory," was her laconic verdict.

Things grew worse. Mother was so possessed by resentment that Uncle William's "treachery" became almost her sole topic of conversation.

Actually, there were no conversations, only screeds. She summoned the ghosts of slights long past, toys broken, taunts, insults and injuries. You'd have thought her childhood was one long tale of abuse, her adolescence an ordeal of scorn and mockery. "I always admired that chest," she whined at last, adding a still more fatal revision of history: "And that's why Mother wanted *me* to have it, not *him*."

Father took to coming home later; he invented more weekend errands, more games with his cronies. Beth and I gave up arguing with or even trying to propitiate Mother in favor of avoiding her.

Brian and Seth called back and said things were getting nearly as bad at their end. Uncle William, who used to be so easy-going, had turned peevish and irritable. He raised his voice to Aunt Janice because she insisted he make it up with his sister. When the boys seconded her, the result was that he just became more defensive, resentful and isolated. He said that what he expected from them was support, not mediation.

"And," Brian added, "he polishes that damned chest every Sunday. The house stinks of lemon oil all the time."

Seth really did have a plan but one which, in retrospect, didn't make a lot of sense. At the time, though, it seemed brilliant and audacious—the one way to cut the knot, to lance the boil. Perhaps it appealed to me because I so seldom transgressed and it was a way of playing at illegality—a clever, safe adventure. Anyway, I took my cue from Beth and she went for it right away.

The plan was to steal the famous chest—to abduct it, rather—and keep it hidden until the adults came to their senses. The logic of the thing was that if the source of the feud was this hunk of wood, then if we removed it everything would go back to normal. Later, we could think about restoring the chest and everybody would have a good laugh. Seth said he had this friend with a pickup who knew of a perfect place: an abandoned shed. He'd already offered him a hundred bucks.

Beth explained all this and put her hand over the phone. "I'm going to insist on going along," she whispered.

"Me too," I answered with joyous recklessness.

Seth and Brian weren't keen. They had good arguments against including us: the risk, the space we'd take up in the truck, the additional excuse-making, the more complicated timing. But Beth said that our participation was, in fact, vital because, after all, this was *family* business. She was adamant, hitting her knee with her fist as she argued.

The boys gave in eventually, and Seth promised to phone back the following night with details. He did, but first he dropped something a tad thermonuclear.

I couldn't hear his voice but Beth said later it sounded kind of choked, funny. "Look," he said. "I don't know how to break this except to say it straight out. Your father and our mother—they're having an affair."

What I did hear was Beth. *"What!"*

"What is it?"

She waved me off and went on saying "What!"

"What *is* it?" I repeated, feeling suddenly scared and curling up at the foot of her bed.

She hissed at me out of the side of her mouth. "Seth says they're having an affair."

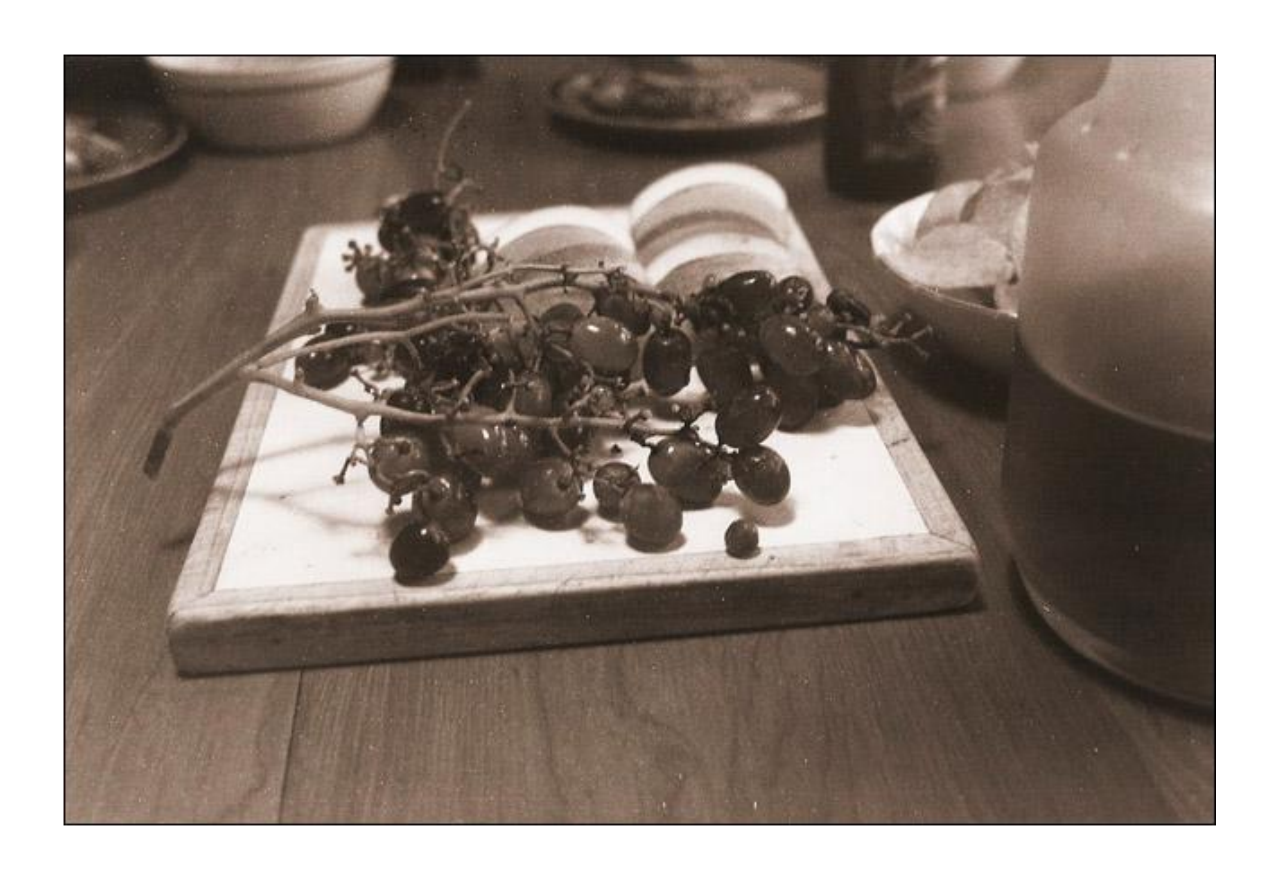
"*Who* is?"

"Dad and Aunt Janice."

"*What*?"

"And you know this how?" she demanded of Seth.

"You're father's been gone a lot, hasn't he?"



"That doesn't prove anything. He's just hiding from Mom. So are *we*."

"Well, our mom's been gone a lot, too. Said it was a new yoga class. We trailed her. They use this motel out on Route 45."

"You *saw* them?"

"Well, we didn't peek through any keyholes. But we saw their cars; we saw her get out; we saw them kiss each other and the way they did it."

"Jesus."

“*What*?” I yelled.

“Shh. Later,” Beth snapped at me.

Seth then explained the plan and made it sound more urgent than ever, though we really ought to have realized it was pointless.

Uncle William and Aunt Janice were going to a dinner party on Saturday night. It was easy for us to convince our parents we had a double date and would meet up with the boys at an imaginary, highly-chaperoned, school dance. Dad thought that was cute; Mom didn’t seem to be paying attention.

Seth’s friend Josh had a tattoo of a Chinese dragon on his left arm. I picked up right away on the way he looked at Beth and the way Beth looked back. It was a case of irresistible bad boy/good girl magnetism. Brian and Seth noticed nothing; they were focused on burgling their own home.

Beth and I squeezed into the cab, with Beth next to Josh. Our cousins rode in the bed with the chest which the three boys wrangled neatly through the garage. Josh took it slow, wary of cops and liking Beth right up beside him like that. We drove out of town on Route 45, passing three motels, turned off the highway at Rosedale then headed into the country. The shed was about 20 yards from the dirt road Josh drove us up. It was one of those weathered, tumble-down barns that always make me feel sad. Seth and Brian had brought along a chain, a tarp and a padlock. Beth and I ran along beside them as they hefted the big old thing into the shed. They’d rolled up their

sleeves and that's when I spotted the Chinese dragon. Josh smoked, too. I saw the pack of Marlboros in his shirt pocket.

Brian and I wanted to sit in the bed on the way back. We were feeling pretty wild.

"You think they'll get divorced?" he shouted over the noise of the wind.

"I don't know."

He moved closer to me. "If your dad married my mom, what would that make us?"

I considered this puzzle. "I'd say it was a wash."

"Oh yeah. I guess." He punched my arm gently. "God, this is *fun*, isn't it?"

Beth began going out with Josh. Well, not "going out" exactly; that sounds conventional. Sneaking out's more like it. With Dad so busy with golf and tennis and Aunt Janice and Mom drilling further into her apparently inexhaustible gusher of bitterness, there wasn't anybody to disapprove except me.

"You've got him wrong," said Beth, eyes all a-glow.

"It's you who's got him wrong," I retorted and reminded her of the jerks I'd pegged right. I said Josh was worse than all of them put together.

An infatuated 17-year-old is going to listen to the wisdom of her little sister? Right.

One Saturday night she didn't come home until the next day. Mom didn't notice and Dad was away for the weekend on a "business trip."

Meanwhile the boys told us Uncle William had begun to crack. When they got back from the dinner party he called the police at once. The officers were more suspicious than sympathetic: no locks broken, nothing else taken, an insurance policy recently taken out on Goddard's block-front masterpiece. Brian phoned me and said his father was practically beside himself; he felt guilty for not protecting the thing better.

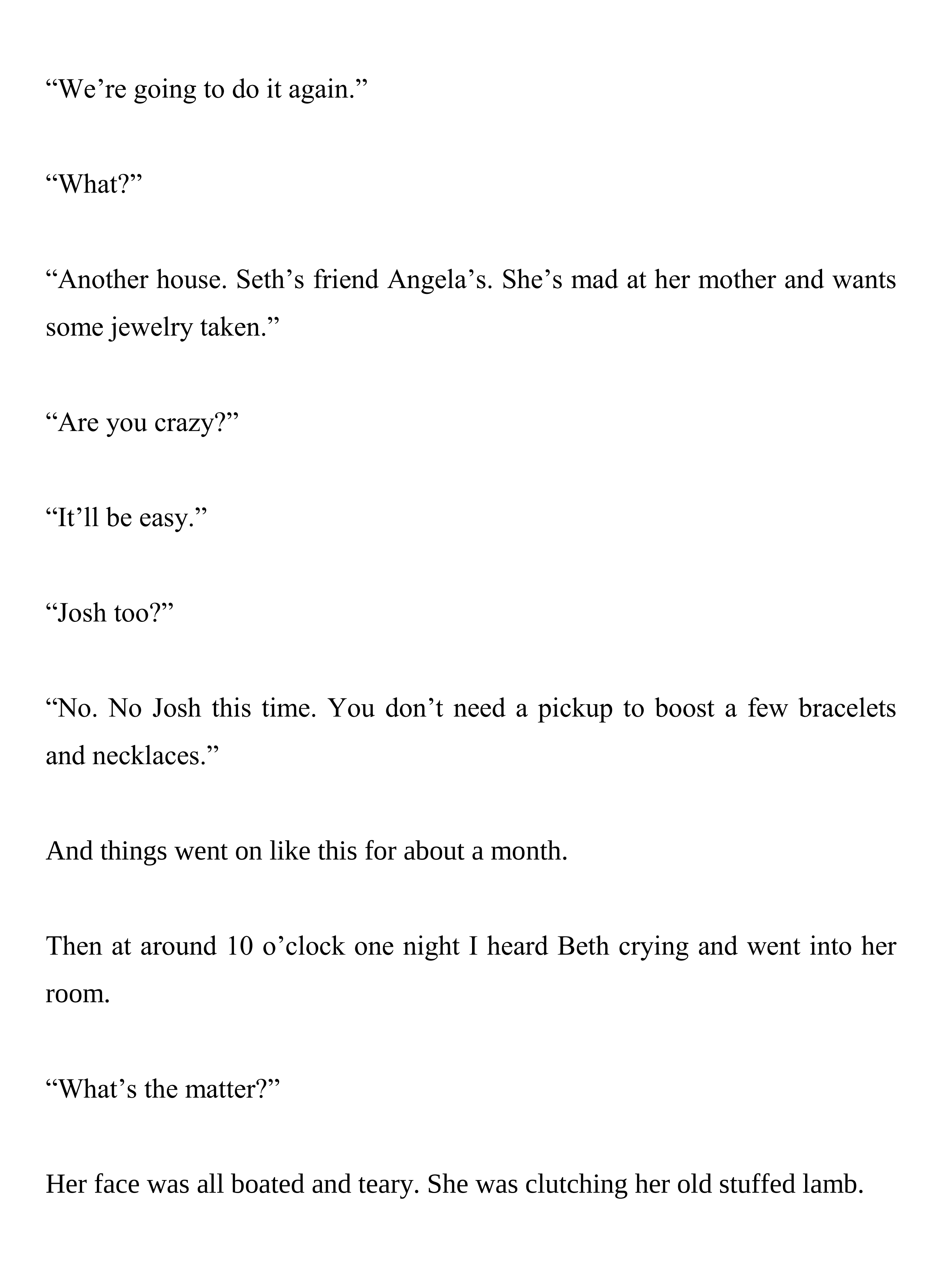
"Maybe we should, you know, give it back?" I suggested.

"That would make everything worse," he said morosely.

"Things are pretty bad as they are," I allowed.

He perked up. "Tell you a secret?"

"Shoot."



“We’re going to do it again.”

“What?”

“Another house. Seth’s friend Angela’s. She’s mad at her mother and wants some jewelry taken.”

“Are you crazy?”

“It’ll be easy.”

“Josh too?”

“No. No Josh this time. You don’t need a pickup to boost a few bracelets and necklaces.”

And things went on like this for about a month.

Then at around 10 o’clock one night I heard Beth crying and went into her room.

“What’s the matter?”

Her face was all boated and teary. She was clutching her old stuffed lamb.

"My life's a catastrophe. Grades all gone to hell. Josh says he's joining the Marines."

"The Marines? Why?"

"Look. I'm. . . pregnant. All right? Don't tell!"

I dropped on to her bed. "Jesus, Beth."

She looked forlorn. "I tore up my college applications."

"You what?"

"My life's over, so what's the point?"

"Don't say that."

She looked away from me, at the far wall. "We were sitting on this bench in the park when I told him and he stood up and told me what he was going to do and

She started to wail, but quietly, so Mother wouldn't hear her, though Mother wouldn't have heard because it turned out she was downstairs listening to Dad tell her he wanted a divorce.

Uncle William and Aunt Janice separated. Dad moved into a garden apartment and Mom hired a lawyer—"a real barracuda," she called him. She even found some Shakespeare to quote at us for the occasion: " … as the long divorce of steel falls on me, make of your prayers one sweet sacrifice, and lift my soul to heaven." It's so obscure she must have looked it up. "The operant word, girls," she said furiously, "is *steel*."

Josh went to Parris Island and then overseas. Beth had a secret abortion—paid for by Seth and Brian with some of the money they'd gotten for all the stuff they were stealing. Then they got caught. Unfortunately, Seth had just turned eighteen, so he went to prison. The judge gave Brian two years parole on the grounds of being so young and under the influence of his brother.

As for the Goddard chest, it was turned to ash when I went back to the abandoned farm and burned down the shed.

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When my Mother Cleaned my Room by Isabella Montsouris

[**Montreal**] When I was very young, I went on a two week long trip with my grandmother, and while I was away, my mom decided to clean and organize my bedroom to a perfectly put-together and essentially unlived-in Martha Stewart state.

I was an unbridled hurricane at that age, but there was creativity amongst the chaos. We were a family of little means, so writing had become my solace: winsome poetry and rambling prose, song lyrics and abstract sketches.

When I learned about her plans to clean and tidy-up, I cried, fearing that my private hamlet would be invaded and conquered, my whimsies and words all read, laughed at and cast away as if they were meaningless scribbles and scrawls.

Upon returning home, I found my room devoid of color and character, turned over and barren like fallow earth. All my manuscripts had been tossed out with the trash. My room reminded me of the set dressing in a film, with carefully arranged assemblages of stuff and things, all meant to give the impression of coziness and comfort, but bereft of actual life. The room was no longer mine and felt disingenuous, a mirage: like when you close your eyes after a sunward gaze, and you see an impression of brightness that fades away into black.

That room never felt like my own again, and it was the genesis for a poignant shift: I stopped feeling like I had permission to be childlike and free, and as life became mired in upheaval and trauma, being reined and restrained was sometimes the clearest path to emotional survival.

It cut to the quick what she had done, especially throwing away my manuscripts. She sat me down and had a heart to heart talk with me. She had found among them a few sketches of what I was not suppose to know about – the boy bits. She wanted to know where I had seen them. I said in an art book at the library. She asked me who was the artists and I said Michelangelo. So she assumed it was his David I had sketched form.

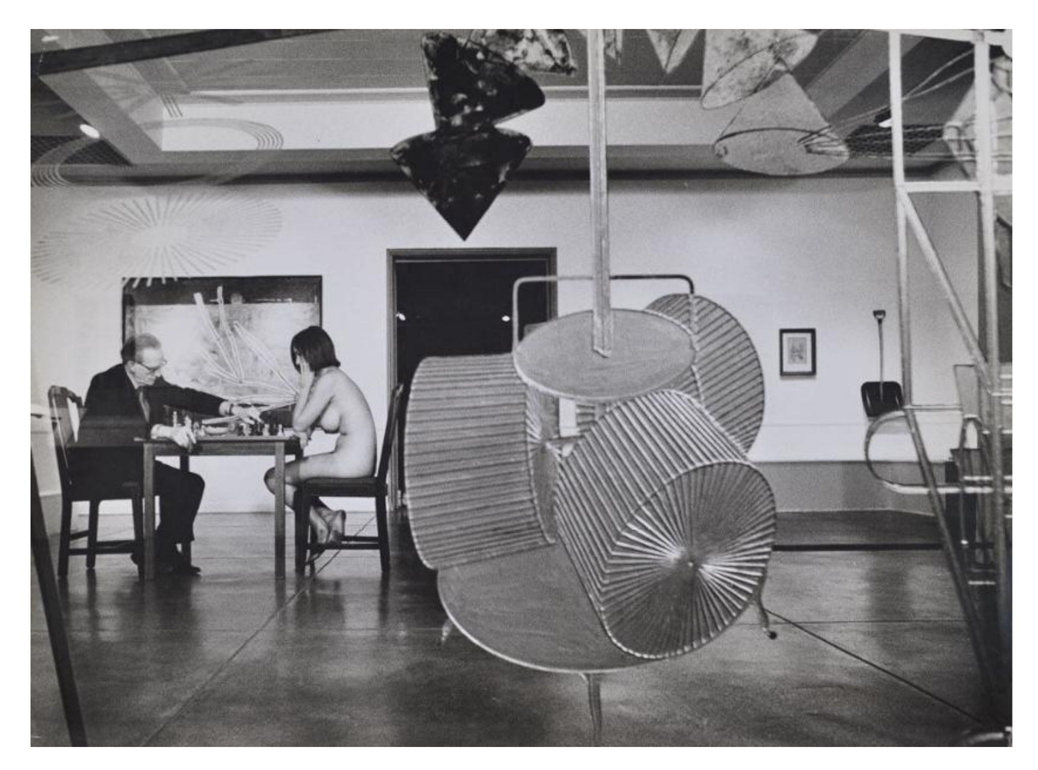
But in fact it was the boy next door. It was during a … you show me yours and I will show you mine ... He went first, but I chickened out.

After she cleaned my room I stopped talking with my mom about the things I felt or dreamed about. I had stopped trusting her.

We would move several times in the following years, we would lose one home to a fire, but even when everything I owned was swallowed by ash and smoke, I just kept trying to rebuild the refuge I longed for.

A Strange Chess Pair – Duchamp and Babitz by Ani Gavani

One of the strangest photographs from a rather bizarre decade, the 1960's, is the pictorial of the elderly French Surréalist Marcel Duchamp and the youthful American writer Eve Babitz sitting playing chess at the Pasadena Art Museum.



Duchamp and Babitz playing chess, 1963

If you have not seen this iconic photograph, I would be surprised. It can only mean that neither art nor art history is of interest to you. This unique photograph is described by the Smithsonian Archives of American Art as being "*among the key documentary images of American modern art*".

The photomontage was taken within a gallery that surrounds the two with some of Duchamp's Surréal art. They sat playing amid the set-up of a retrospective showing with pieces of Duchamp's Dada, Surréal and found art, that spanned a half century of his artistry – from the 1910's to the 1960's.

By the time the picture of the fully clothed Marcel Duchamp and the naked Eve Babitz sitting playing chess was taken, in 1963, Duchamp had been in self-imposed retirement … for want of inspiration and continued companionship. He was an old and lonely man. Most of Duchamp's friends had either passed away or moved on to other forms of artistry.

By the early 1960's the Surrealist Movement which had begun and flourished three decades prior, was not necessarily dead, it was just dormant. The main actors such as Duchamp, Man Ray and Dali were not as busy as they once were in their youth, and the market for their works was all but satiated.

Following the 1963 Duchamp Retrospective and the renewed artistry of personalities like Salavador Dali, the Surréal World would change considerably.

A Surréalist Resurgence was slowly launched and it appears to have been inadvertent, coinciding to a great extent with the unbridled sexuality of the 1960's. While it may be easy to suggest that Duchamp was responsible for this resurgence, in retrospective it was perhaps a young and beautiful woman

named Eve that lead the Adams of the Surréalist Movement back into Paradise. This perhaps why this photomontage is so unique for its time. Only a handful of pictures were taken by Wasser in the space of a thirty minute long chess game. The two chatted while they played. One of things they chatted about was Babitz's grandfather the composer Stravinsky and Firebirds, and his dalliances with Coco Chanel

The year 1963 is a rather significant year for the study of Popular Culture in the United States. It was the year of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy and the suicide of Marilyn Monroe. It was the year of the Mercury Astronauts in orbit around the Earth. It was the year that D.H. Lawrence's book *Lady Chatterly's Lover* was deemed to be artistic, not pornographic. It is the year that Hugh Heffner's Play Boy Magazine sold like hot cakes. It is the year that Ian Fleming's James Bond appeared on the big screen in *Goldfinger*. It is the year sexuality burned like a hot prairie fire.

I think 1963 should also be remembered as the year that a beautiful twenty year old Eve woman took off her dress, brassiere and panties and sat proudly and defiantly opposite an icon of the Surréalist Movement, playing out a surreal game of chess.

And all the while as the two played with each other the burley and sweating workmen brought in the exhibit pieces, smirking to themselves in amazement at what they saw. The Gallery Manager, Walter Hopps, was nowhere to be seen and did not know this chess game was being played out.

Eve Babitz's sexual relationship with the much older Gallery Manager was part of the drama.



Duchamp had met and talked with Walter Hopps before the chess game, but met Eve Babitz only moments before the photomontage were taken.

As they sat together the Frencman Marcel Duchamp had no understanding of the motivation of why a young woman would want sit naked and played chess with him, perhaps thinking it was *une Action Surréale* for a Surréal Retrospective exhibit. The photography had proposed the idea to the two subjects of the photomontage. Duchamp was not aware of the sexual tension between the twenty year old Eve and the decade older, and married Walter Hopps. Eve loved the idea of the nude chess game, and knew that she would be getting under Hopp's skin while doing something that would bring her fame and notoriety.

Eve would later admit that … there was method to her madness.



Duchamp and Hopps discussing the Retrospective Exhibit, 1963



Marcel Duchamp emphasizing a point, Retrospective, 1963



Marcel Duchamp pointing to the Urinal, Retrospective, 1963

In the early 1960s, Hopps, who was then married to art historian Shirley Nielsen, began an affair with the young Eve. Just when it started no one knows. Rumor has it that Babitz and Hopps had had sex when she was just the age of consent …



Eve Babitz, circa 1959

By 1963 Hopps was also making advances towards Eve's younger 17-year-old sister Miranda, although it appears with less success. It was in the midst

of Hopp's lust for two Babitz girls that Eve played her moves. It was also her first brush with sex and notoriety.



Eve Babitz, circa 1963

Eve claims that she didn't receive an invite to the Duchamp's Retrospective opening at the Hotel Green because Walter Hopps's suspicious wife was in town, but Babitz's younger sister Miranda, got to attend. Arrangements were made by Hopps for photographer Julian Wasser to drive Miranda to the opening. The lothario Julian Wasser was a figurative photographer who enjoyed taking pictures of young women.

Seething with envy towards Hopps, Babitz wanted to take revenge on her paramour. Wasser, who was known for taking nude photographs of young women, suggested a titillating form of retribution: playing chess in the nude, with Duchamp at the museum.

Babitz told the Archives of American Art that the proposition seemed "like the best idea I'd ever heard in my life.…I mean, it was, not only was it vengeance, it was art." Lessening her own inhibitions, perhaps, was the fact that Wasser had already shot her naked, at her own command: To stoke amorous fires Eve had requested and Wasser had obliged to take sexy snapshots of her to share with men.

Let deal with a few misconceptions, shall we. It was not of Duchamp's doing that this nude pictorial came about. It was foisted upon Marcel Duchamp within the Gallery by both Babitz and the photographer Julian Wasser, neither of whom he had met until they walked up to him in the gallery, introduced themselves and then proposed the photoshoot. Wasser was doing a photo layout of the Duchamp Retrospective for Time Magazine.

Wasser coordinated the photo shoot without alerting either the museum or Duchamp about his intentions. During the chess game, Babitz and Duchamp discussed her godfather, Stravinsky, and his famous 1910 suite, *The Firebird*.

Duchamp won their speed chess games as Wasser clicked his shutter. Towards the end of the game, Hopps walked into the gallery and was so surprised that his jaw hit the floor. According to Babitz, he began returning her calls after the incident.

Wasser showed Babitz the proofs. She enjoyed them and selected one in which she was turned away from the camera, her face obscured by her

bobbed hair, for general circulation. At first, she wanted to conceal her identity from the public, though she eventually opened up about her participation in the famous photograph. Her picture showed conveyed both shyness and exhibitionism, a plea for both attention and anonymity.

Why a game of chess? … Chess is considered the universal game of the Surréalists (oh and the Dadaists as well … if you insist for distinctions …)

Duchamp was famous for many of his art pieces including his submissions to the 1913 Amory showing which included four pieces including *Nu qui Descendant l'Escalier*. Today the piece is in the collection of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Wasser used this as a conceptual starting point in putting together the photoshoot.

It was Wasser's idea to do the nude photoshoot and the both Wasser and Babitz foisted the idea on Duchamp of a surreal game of chess. I don't know of any seventy-six year old male artist who would turn down such an offer.

Duchamp himself described what prompted this type of art by him:

> "In 1912 … the idea of describing the movement of a nude coming downstairs while still retaining static visual means to do this, particularly interested me. The fact that I had seen chronophotographs of fencers in action and horse galloping (what we today call stroboscopic photography) gave me the idea for the Nude. It doesn't mean that I copied these photographs. The Futurists were also

interested in somewhat the same idea, though I was never a Futurist. And of course the motion picture with its cinematic techniques was developing then too. The whole idea of movement, of speed, was in the air".



Duchamp, Nu qui Descendant l'Escalier

Duchamp is also remembered for doing the Adam and Eve pictorial in 1925



Adam and Eve , Marcel Duchamp &
Brogna Perlmütter, Man Ray 1925

At the Retrospective, a table with the chess set was the central piece in one of the galleries of the exhibit and it had been intended that Duchamp would sit and play chess with visitors to his Retrospective. The artist himself would be *un tableau vivant*.

Hopps played chess with Duchamp, at the opening of the Retrospective the day after the Surréal game with Eve Babitz. This is one of the pictures that appeared in the local media of Duchamp playing chess with Hopps..



You have to wonder what Marcel Duchamp was thinking after he won the game!



By the end of the Retrospective Exhibit Marcel Duchamp had fitted together all the pieces in the puzzle of Eve Babitz and Walter Hopps. He knew then that Eve had played him like a chess piece and that she had been an artist and an instigator.

But what makes the Retrospective memorable are the photographs that Wasser took of the Surréal Chess Game. .



The philosopher who wanted to prove he did not exist …

You heard the tale of the philosopher who wanted to prove he did not exist

No I haven't …

He stepped out into traffic and was run over by a bus!

Connection by Adam Grant Warren

"I don't think this is working."

"What? I can't hear you. The audio is shit. And the video is worse. I'll call you back."

I click the X in the top left-hand corner of the video window and your face, a patchwork quilt of frozen pixels, disappears. I click another button and my computer starts to ring.

Do you remember that phone we used to have? The old black rotary dial thing you found in my parents' basement and dragged into our living room? The Bat Phone, you called it. No good for telephone banking, or even checking voicemail. With that phone, there had to be a real live person on the other end to pick up and say hello. But there was an actual bell inside, with a tiny hammer and everything. You loved that sound. And whenever it rang, you got to shout "To the Bat Phone!" Which, as far as you were concerned, was totally worth the lack of Caller ID.

It took two months for the novelty to wear off that thing. But before we got frustrated and put the Bat Phone back in my dad's basement, I recorded it and saved the ring as a .WAV sound file. I imported the .WAV to the audio profile for VideoChat and attached that ringtone to your contact. Now, whenever you call, my computer rings the way the Bat Phone did.

Tonight, you let it ring ring ring ring ring ring ring before you answer. At first, I think it's because you want to hear the bell. Then I realize that it only sounds that way for me. I sent you the file, batphone.wav, but you said you couldn't figure out how to make it work.

"Hey," you say, your face finally moving in time with your voice. I ask you if the connection is better now and you tell me it's awesome.

Things are only "awesome" for you when something is wrong. They can be great, or cool, or wicked – things have even been rad a couple of times. But when they're awesome, something has either just gone to shit or is about to go to shit. When I told you I'd make reservations at The Press and Bean for your birthday, but forgot and tried to convince you that we didn't need them, things were awesome all the way to the restaurant. When you told your dad that you were putting your MBA on hold to go teach English in Japan, things were awesome for weeks afterward. And here we are. You in Japan and me with a double bed all to myself. Awesome.

I click another button and your face expands to fill my whole monitor. I can still hear every word you're saying – your boss is an asshole, pretending not to notice that he's paying you less than he said he would; you went to see an ancient temple yesterday, which was weird because it was right in the middle of the city, next to a motopark. You ask me how my day was, but before I can tell you, your video feed starts to break down again. It's not completely frozen, but it stops and starts, your lips sprinting to keep pace with the things you've already said.

“The video is going to freeze again,” I say.

“What?”

“The feed is all wonky. You’re going to freeze in a couple of seconds.”

“Fine,” you say. “I’ll call you back. I’m going to take a shower.”

I remember two months ago. You left for Japan and I waited for that first call. I fell asleep by the computer and when it rang, I forget you were gone and called out. “Jess! Bat Phone!” On my computer screen: “Jess is calling. Accept/Decline.”

I clicked “Accept” and filled my monitor with your tiny apartment on the other side of the planet. You carried your laptop around the one small room, put me down on the bed, on the desk and on the middle shelf of the bookcase while you opened every drawer and cupboard. We talked about what would go where. About the things you’d need to make the place a home. Then you brought me into the bathroom – put the laptop by the sink and tilted the camera towards you. You undressed, showered and described the feeling of the water on your body. All that night, and into the next morning, the video connection never even hiccupped.

When you finally call back tonight, your hair is in a towel and the rest of you is hidden in a too-big Wonder Woman T-shirt. I watch your face moving one

frame at a time, while you tell me how even though your boss is an asshole, you still love the city. So much. How your students have learned to respect you and how you're going to visit "the country" tomorrow with one of the other teachers, so you won't be online for a while.

"Okay," I say.

You don't say anything. And then: "Hello?"

"Hello? Jess? I'm here. I said okay. I think it's awesome that you're going to the country. Take lots of pictures."

"Oh. Yeah. I didn't hear you before. Something must have frozen."

"Do you want me to call you back?"

"No. I think… I think I'm going to go to bed. The connection is shit tonight, anyway."

"Oh. Okay. Goodnight."

On the screen, your lips move. It looks like "We'll talk soon," but the call drops before the words can catch up to your mouth.

{First published in This Great Society, May 2011}

Drawing the Male Nude for the First Time by Cindy …

I was very disappointed when my parents said NO!.

No!

No!

No!

Parents like to think they can protect their children from the sins in the world. Fathers like to think they are protecting their daughters. Traditional Chinese fathers in particular. But everywhere you turn there is sin and immorality of one sort or another. From a young age girls in particular learn to steer clear of it. It's the boys who are the ones to fall in with sin. It's the boys that should be locked away.

Why were my parents so emphatic in their NO? I am a teen age girl who wants to become an artist. Ever since I was old enough to hold a wax crayon I enjoyed the sensation of being creative. It brings a funny feeling to me, to my heart, my soul, to my belly and … to my sex. Yes, I have used that three letter word … but not to express sin but to express something artistry. I think that feeling is pure happiness.

I am happiest when I am being artistic … when I have a pencil, or a pastel in my hand, drawing the world around me. I have also discovered the joys of painting and of sculpture.

When I was in elementary school I began to take an interest in drawing Manga – which is Japanese animation. Chinese have an artistic style but it is not a free and liberating as the Japanese. The Japanese live in a post-modern world while China is still very much pre-modern.

Yes, as you may have guessed. My parents at a young age sent me to learn traditional Chinese Art. I can do calligraphy and water colors –mostly in black watercolt – and have learned how to convey somber mood and seriousness to my art. But I don’t really find traditional Chinese art all that interesting.

In middle school I took to drawing self-portraits and the portraits of my friends. I even made a few Mangas which I shared with some of my friends. The girls found them romantic and cute. The boys found them boring and well ‘too girly.’

So one day I decided to shock the boys and drew a racy Manga with barely clothed girls with boys chasing them – trying to tear their clothes off. The Japanese call them *Kureiji Manga* which literally means *Crazy Manga*. Some of the boys thought I was drawing a ‘wishful’ Manga – that I wanted them to chase after me and well … tear my clothes off me. One even tried, but I punched him in the eye. He got the message!

I still draw some *Kureiji Manga*, but I do so with a pen name … *Green Apple* … and in secret … because the boys in my class still get a bit crazy. I have a Persian friend who is a bit crazy … she suggested I start to draw bisexual Manga, with girl parts up top and boy parts down below. She even gave me a picture to use …



I had some fun with my Persian friend and said "so that's what boy bits look like … sort of silly don't you think?'

In the Manga, girls are playing boys … the boy parts are '*strap-ons*' … something my Persian friend introduced me to. Where she got this thing I

will never know. She has a way with her that is almost magical. She asked me one day to play the boy while she wanted to, show me how IT is done. No … I just played the boy. It was truly extraordinary. But I just *did IT* once with her last June. My Persian friend is back in Iran for the summer. Perhaps her parents know what she is up to? I hope she comes back.

If my mother ever found out that I sort of 'did IT as a boy' with my friend I would be locked away and she would throw away the key … or worst yet, send me back to China to live with my Aunt and her three daughters.

In September I start my final year in high school and next year I hope to go to art school back east in either Toronto or Montreal. I have started to put together my portfolio for OCAD or Concordia. I admit I want to go somewhere else other than one of the universities here in Vancouver, like Emily Carr (but in the end I may have to go there if my parents don't let me go to another city for university).

You see my parents don't trust me. How I found this out was unexpected. One day in May when I was in the shower my mother came into the bathroom to give me a new towel and noticed I was shaved … you know where ... down there.

She got very upset! She almost shrieked at me when she asked … '*Who did this?'* It was one of my school friends who had shaved me (don't worry it was a friend) but I lied and said I had done it myself.

‘*Why! It is unnatural for you to do this.*’ She insisted she wanted to see.

I was embarrassed … so at first said no. But my mother would not let me leave the bathroom until I let her see. So I leaned back against the wall, closed my eyes and spread my legs just a bit.

I could feel my mother’s fingers spread my lips apart. Now I understood why she wanted to look. It wasn’t about my lack of hair. She wanted to see whether I was still a virgin.

When I opened my eyes I was alone in the bathroom. I felt a strange sensation that was a mixture of both fear and anger.

My school friend who trimmed me back is my Persian friend who has lots of hair down there and under her arms. She has to shave herself quite often. Once when we were in the changing room at school I noticed out of the corner of my eye that her pubic hair was trimmed in the shape of a heart and so I asked her where she went to have it done.

“*Oh, I have to do it myself. At $ 50 each session I can’t afford to have someone else do a Brazilian ...*”

I am so naïve I had to ask her what a Brazilian was … “*A trimming and waxing*.” I wax my legs once and awhile and boy does that hurt. I can only imagine how it feels to have your … you know what … waxed!

During this summer my parents finally let me take drawing classes at a teaching studio. But the one thing they would not let me do is draw the human figure. I was not even allowed to sit in as the other artists drew the female models. It wasn't as if I would not see something I haven't already seen, except perhaps bigger breasts than I have. Chinese girls rarely have big breasts. Mine are small like little apples … In fact that is what I call them, my little apples. So for this July and August I started to draw portraits of instead. Most times it is the students at the art studio I visit each Thursdays.

Several of the European Masters inspire me in my art, including Rodin, Klimt, Picasso, Matisse and even Schiele. I have even sat and tried to draw myself … in some of the poses you see in some of the great European Masters. When you hold a pencil you can experiment with so many drawing statements.

When we have life drawing in the studio I have to sit at my easel at the far side of the room with my back turned to the model's podium. I finally had a chance to draw the male figure for the first time. It was last week. The studio had a very broad minded male artist model in to sit. During the break he sat and ate some sushi and so I walked over and said hello to him. I made it looked like I was searching for some more charcoal for my drawing in a cupboard next to him. He smiled and looked back at my easel and asked me what I was drawing.

"Oh it's a self-portrait."

“What is it for?”

“My portfolio for art school.”

“Can I go and see …” and he got up and walked over to my easel. He stood there are admire my drawing. I stood next to him and when he leaned forward it was then that I noticed he had taken off his loin cloth and was holding it in his hand. He stepped back without noticing that I had caught a glimpse of him. My face went flush.

“It is very good … your drawing.”

“Thank’s …” I blushed even more.

“You don’t do life drawing?”

“I would like to but …”

“But what?”

“My parents won’t let me.”

“Oh that’s too bad. You would enjoy life drawing.” There was a pause of a few seconds then he took up a pencil and wrote his email and the word

Atelier on a corner of one of my pieces of paper and then set the pencil down.

“I have to go back now …”

“Ok ….”

“You might want to move your easel a bit.”

“Why?”

You’ll see.” And with those three enigmatic words he walked back to the other side of the studio.

When the second half of the life drawing session began he loudly said to the other students “I am going to remove my loin cloth and wear some drapery, but I will keep my back turned to you so you can draw my back.”

My heart skipped a beat. If he was going to turn his back to the other students then this meant he would be facing me!

And sure enough as I looked up over at him there he stood on the podium like a roman senator, drapery hanging from both arms and his masculinity there bare to my view. I heard him say … “it’s a fifteen minute pose so take your time.”

I knew he was speaking to me. I turned my easel slightly towards him, grabbed my charcoal and started to draw. That was the first time I drew the male form and enjoyed every minute of the experience.



Male Nude by George Hoyningen-Huene

At the end of the session after he dressed he walked slowly by my easel. He smiled at me as he walked past and whispered “now you have drawn the male form.”

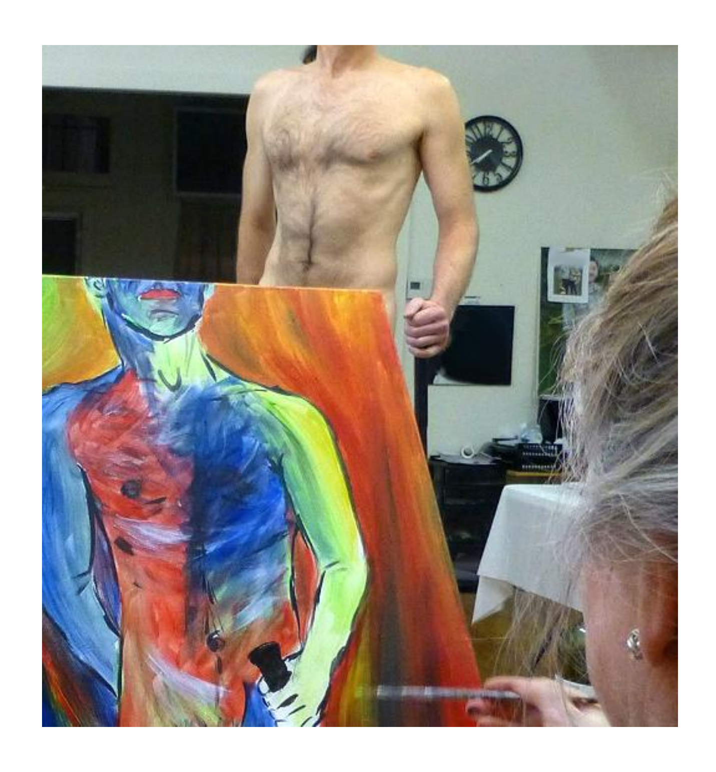
I smiled back. I put my hand in my pocket and touched the piece of paper he had given me. My fingers tingled.

I want to come visit his Atelier and draw him some more!

Artistic Praxis: The Masculine Form for the Figurative Artist

{Excerpt from ***Inspiring Figuratives for Artists*** – Volume Eleven|

The purpose of the ***Inspiring Figurative for Artists*** series is to provide study materials for the artistic praxis of artists who are trying to master the human form. If you master the *Figurative* … it is said you can master art.



Several women artist has asked that Atelier Press provide for more male Figuratives in our series of books. Women artists enjoy exploring the dichotomy of the human condition, yet there are far fewer pictorials of male Figuratives compared to female Figuratives. Women artists also have few opportunities to work with male models than female ones.



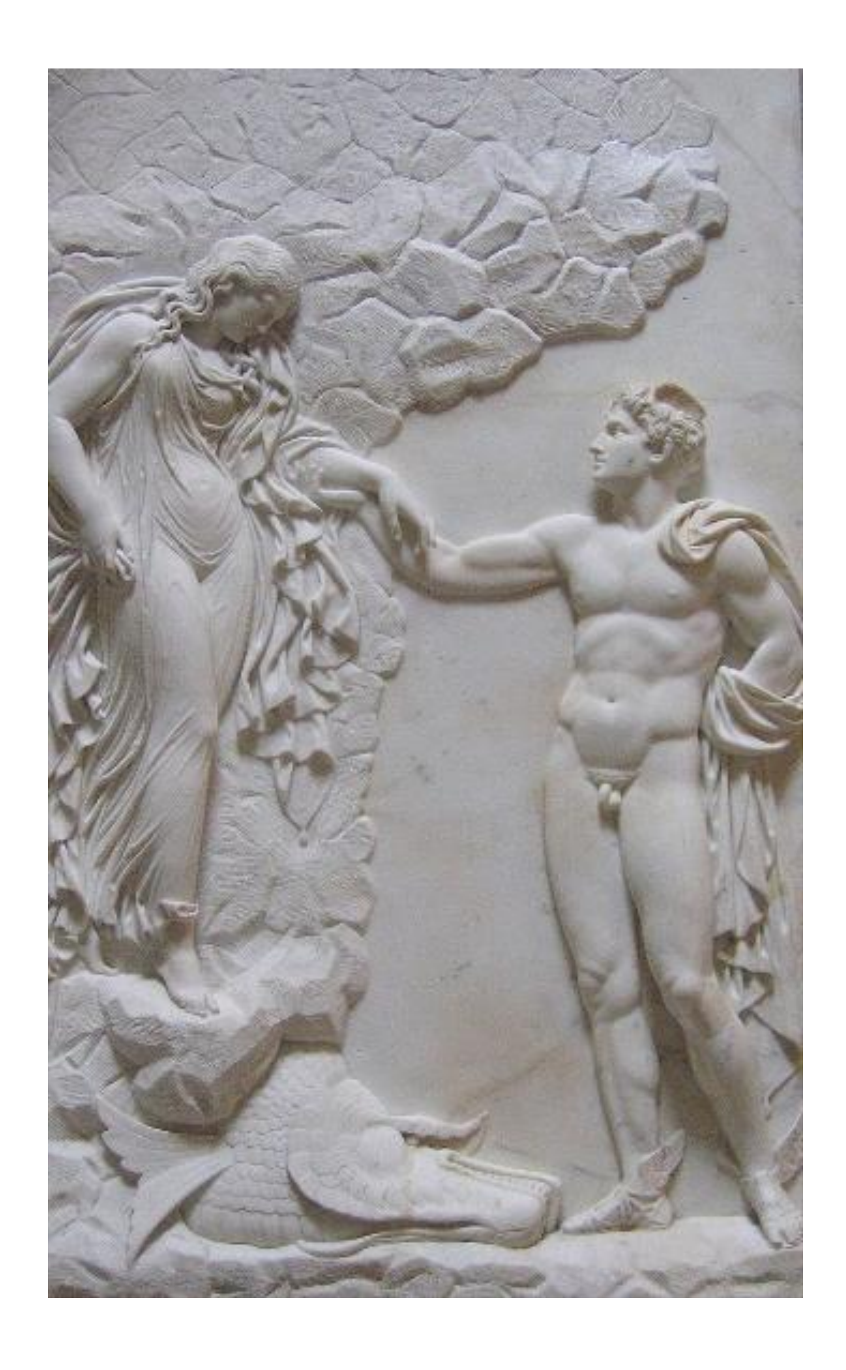
In the artistic sense the male model poses a different challenge than the female model when it comes to form and function. Obviously, the feminine tends to be more curvaceous, and have more reference features, while the masculine tends to be more linear and a far different challenge to draw.

Most women artists also do not know how best to relate to the masculinity of their models.



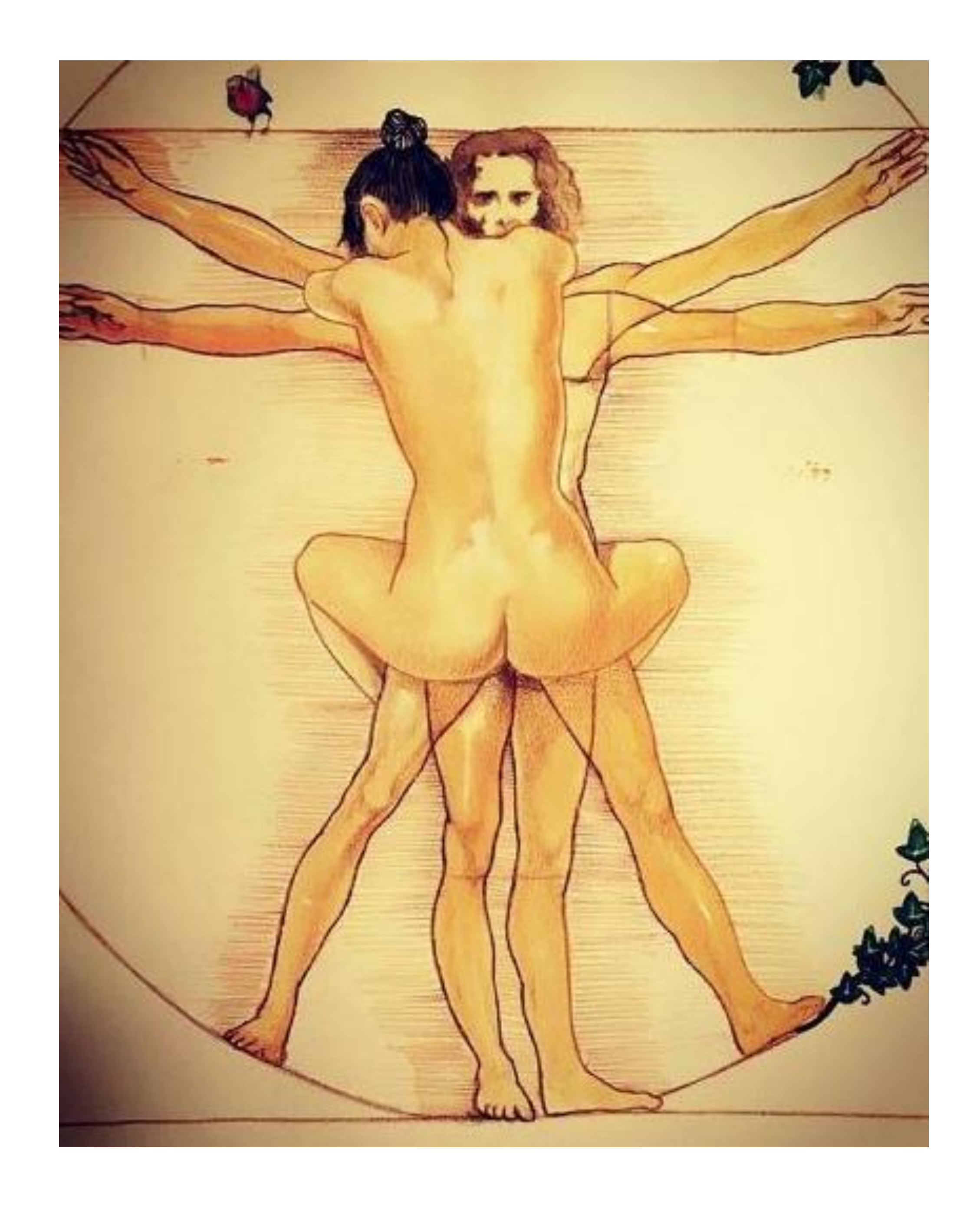
In terms of reliefs and sculptures, we find many reminders of the complementary nature or the male and female.

For instance in mythological art we have Perseus and Andromeda (Julius Troschel, 1840):



The complementary nature of the male and female form can be expressed in many ways.

Here is how one contemporary female artist has expressed it:



which is, of course, an intimate twist on Leonardo da Vinci's *Vitruvian Man*.

The theme of Hercules holding up the World also presents the male form:



The male form appears in many sculptors about classical and contemporary themes, such as an Olympic Discuss thrower:



The proportionality of the hands, feet and head of the figure tends to be accurate, as is the torso legs and arms, but many times not so the masculinity of the model.

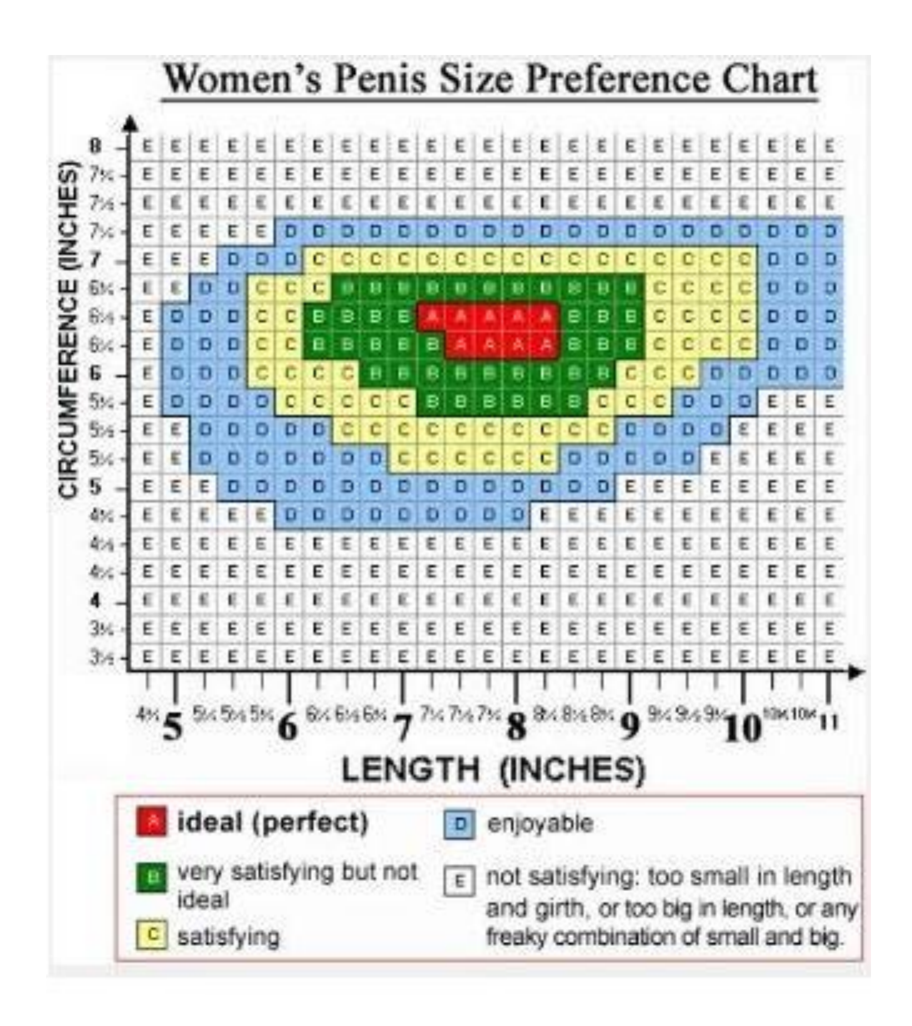
In many works of art the masculinity of the figure is turtled away and is not presented in its genuine splendor. We see this time and time again in both classical and contemporary art, as if arousal is not part of the masculine world. Here is a painting by Gericault of an adult male with what can only be described as 'baby bits':



One has only to compare the length of the model's thumbs to the length of his masculinity to realize the artist has failed to represent the fullness of him.

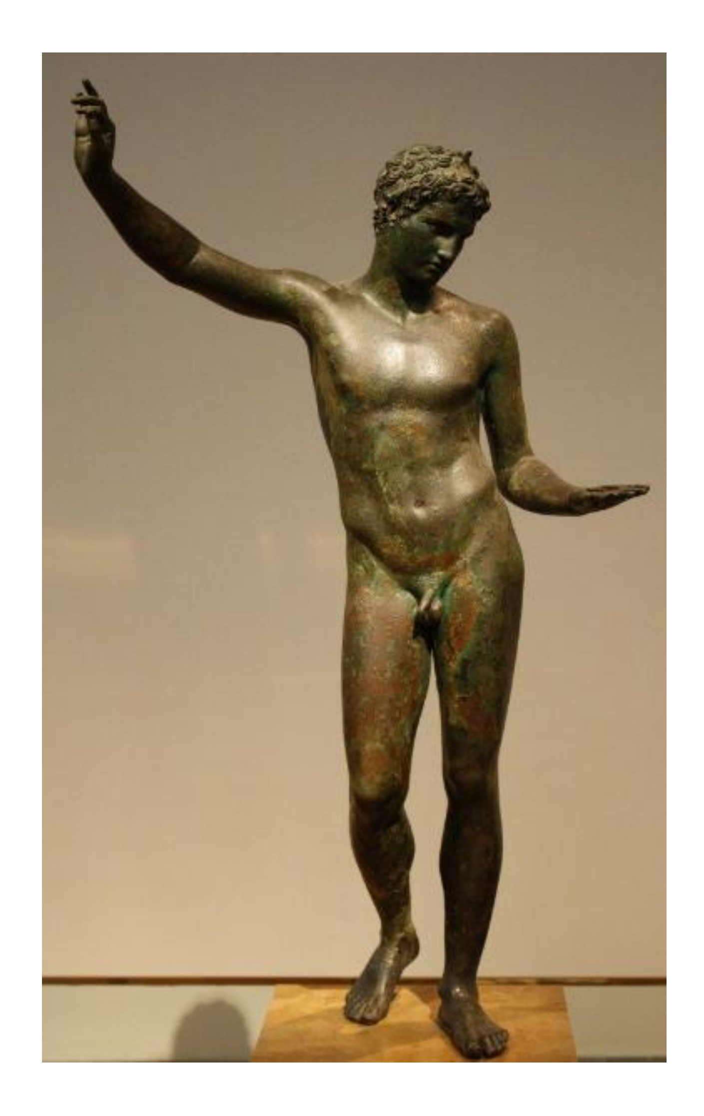
Yes, there is a rule of thumb!

Studies have been done of the aesthetics of masculinity seen through the eyes of women. Here is the result of one such study by an American medical group (the conversion inch to cm is 1: 2.54):



The aesthetic ideal seems to be in the ratio of about 3 to 4 as far as masculine circumference to masculine length is concerned. It appears that that a uniform circumference is preferred over a uniform length. This is perhaps understandable given the physiological purpose of the masculinity.

Sometimes it is not the length but the girth that is wanting, as in this classical bronze:



The length and girth of this bronze's masculinity is no more pronounced than his little finger. Is it possible that the model for this ancient Greek bronze was perhaps only fifteen? The roundness of the shape of his head seems to indicate youth.

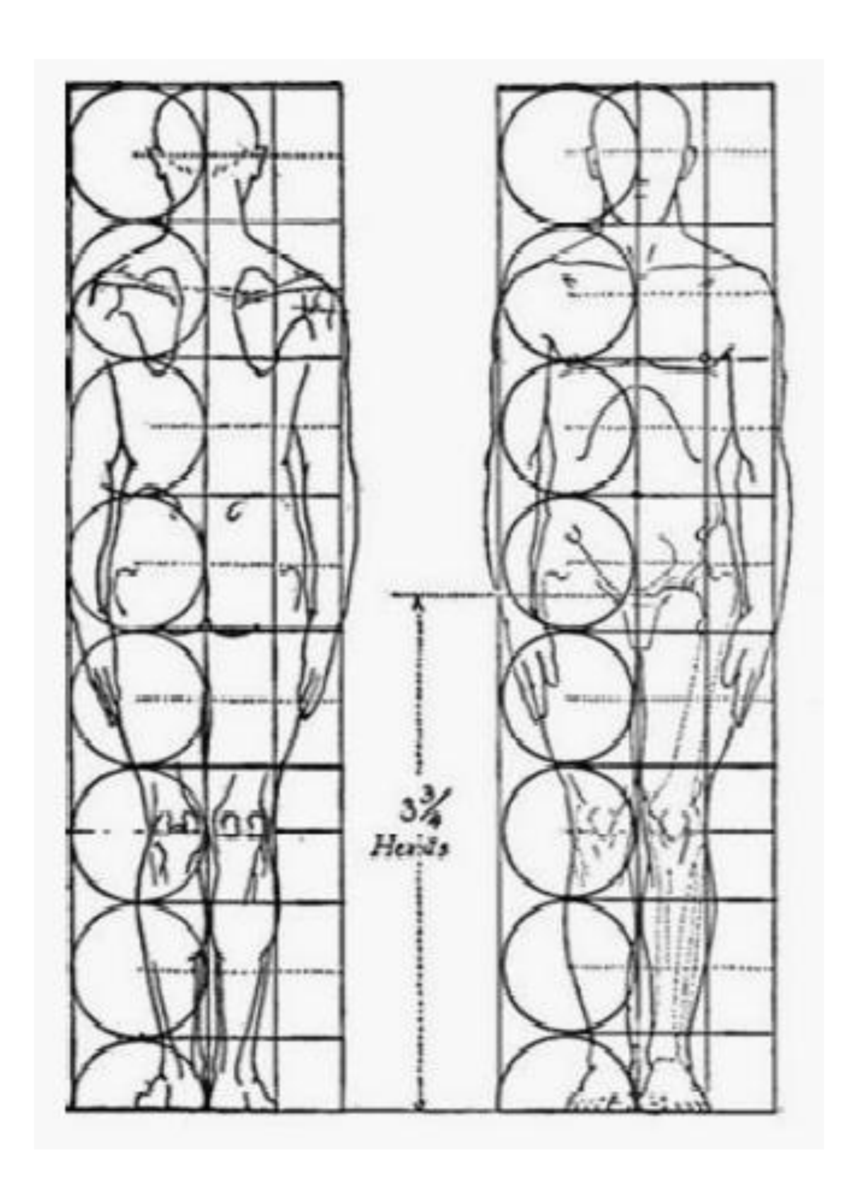
Did you know that you can also estimate the age of a model by the size and shape of their knees … in some of the pictorials in this book take a close look at the shape of the model’s knees and see if you notice this.

In the next sculpture it is not only his head that is out of proportion to the rest of his body, he is still out or proportion in other ways as well:



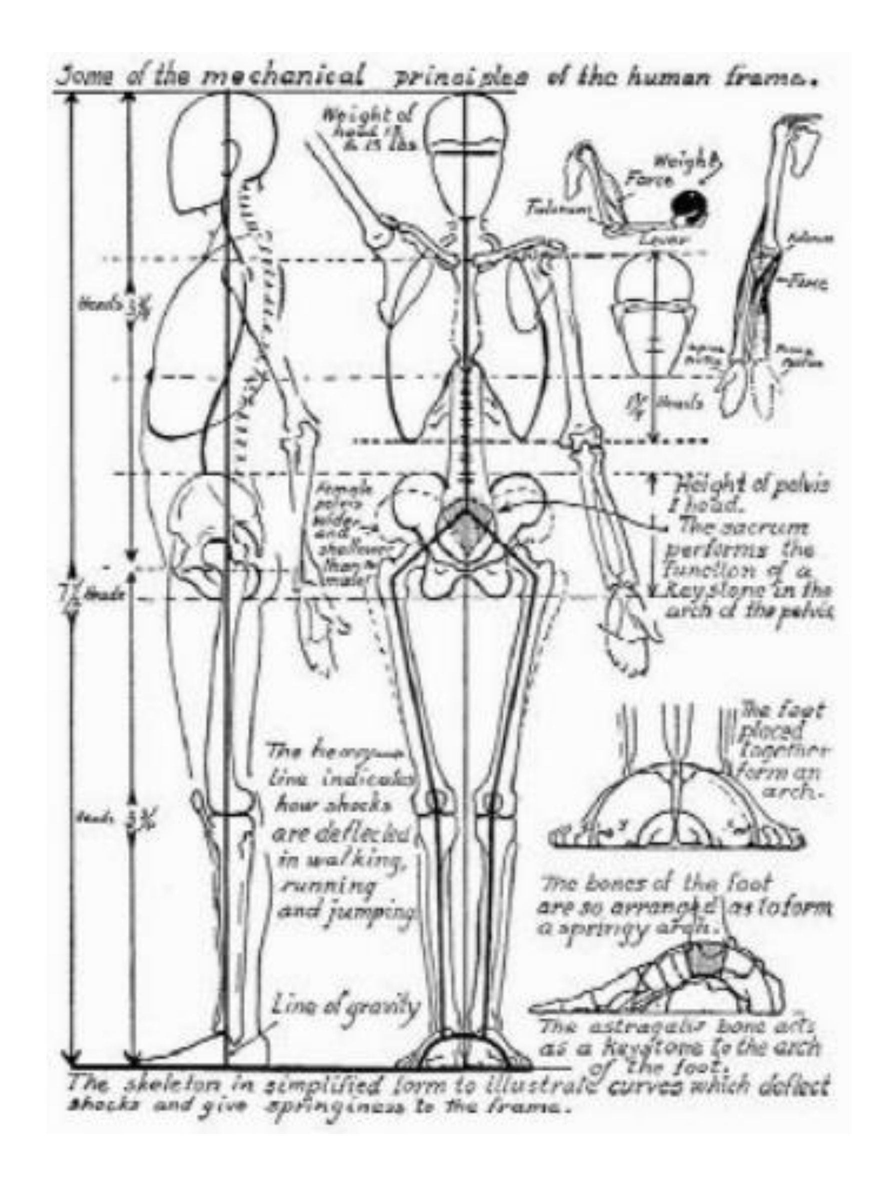
Perhaps this sculpture was cast in segments or pieces and then assembled. While his masculinity is in proper form, his neck is two vertebrae too long, *n’est ce pas*?

Here is a reminder of the proportions of a typical male:

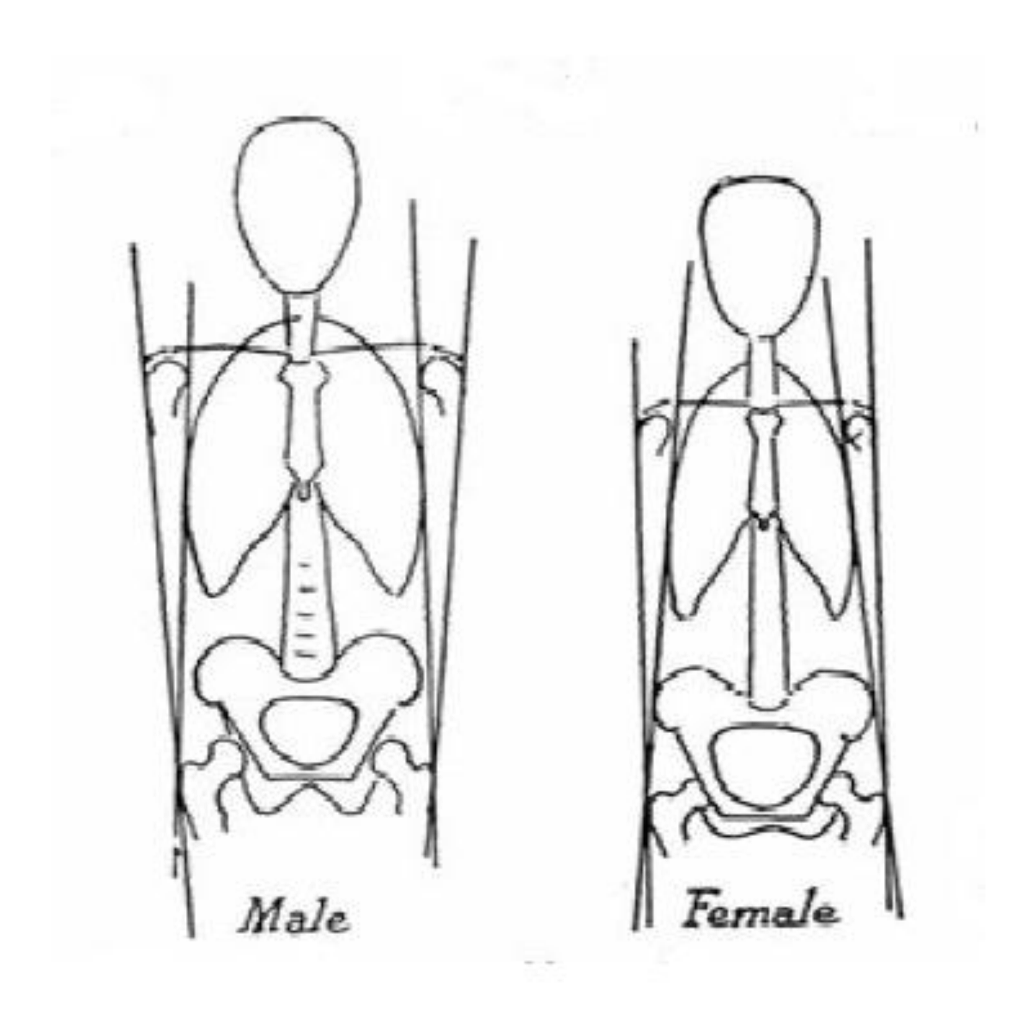


This is from Victor Perard's excellent anatomy book for artists, which is freely available online as a pdf. An artist is taught to build up their artwork from the inside out, working outward from the skeletal structure.

You notice that the male form is linear and almost rectangular.

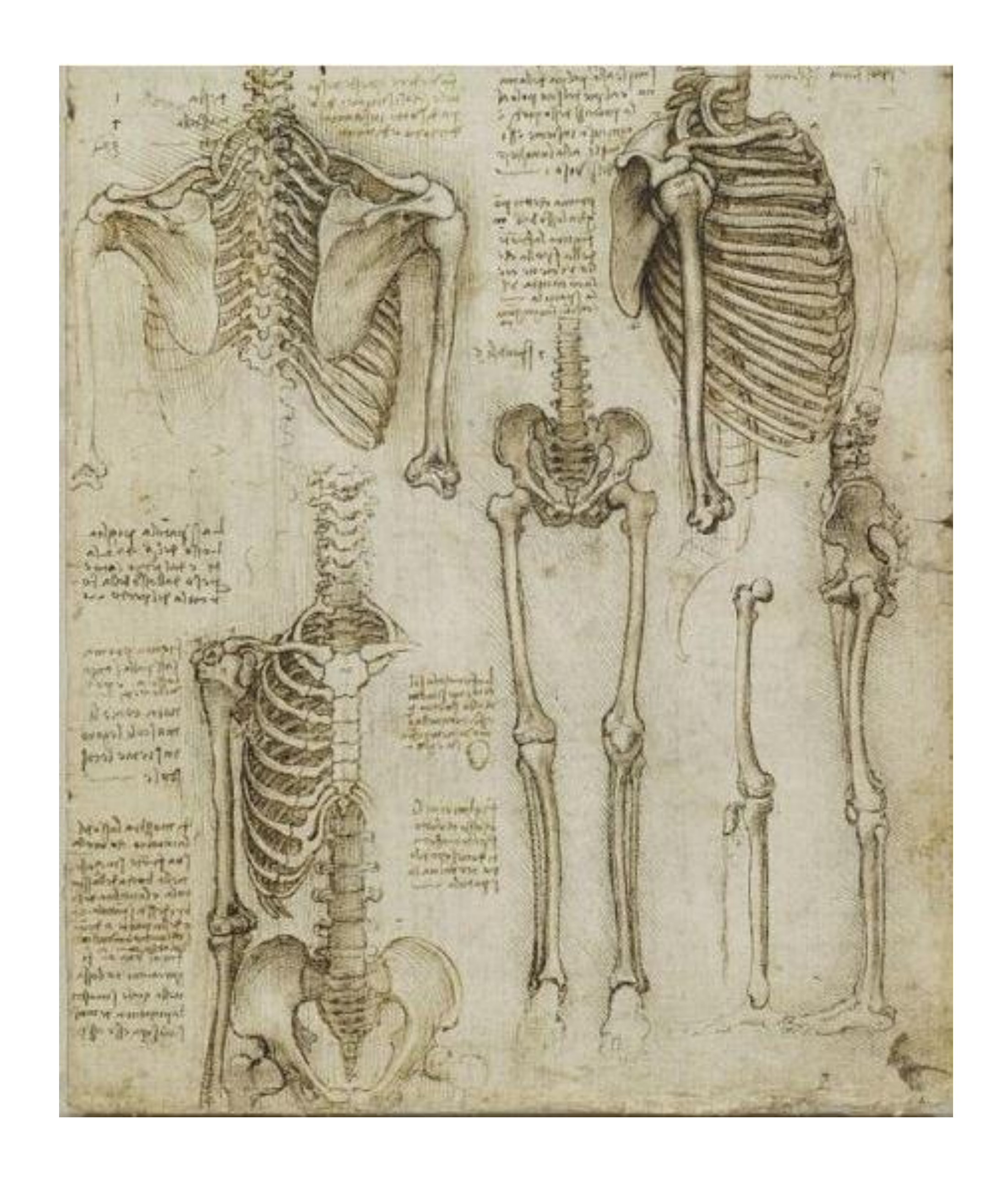


One defining difference between male and female is the skeletal shape of the torso, and in particular the hips. On a male the shoulders are broader than the hips, while on a female the hips are broader than the shoulders.



The reason is that women bring babies into the world and so the bottom of a woman's pelvis has a wider opening than that of a male to accommodate the birth canal. You note this in the drawing of the pelvis.

The detailed anatomical sketches done by Leonardo da Vinci are evidentially those of men. He worked off cadavers, and female cadavers were few and far between.



As many artists have noticed, masculinity changes appearance with awakening (you notice I don't use the p-word). Some people, even artists, are uncomfortable with the p-word – the male *Penis*. Many euphemisms are used instead!

Some women artists don't even bother to draw the masculine and present their models as cuckolded. But ultimately it is only a cylinder and two ovoids …

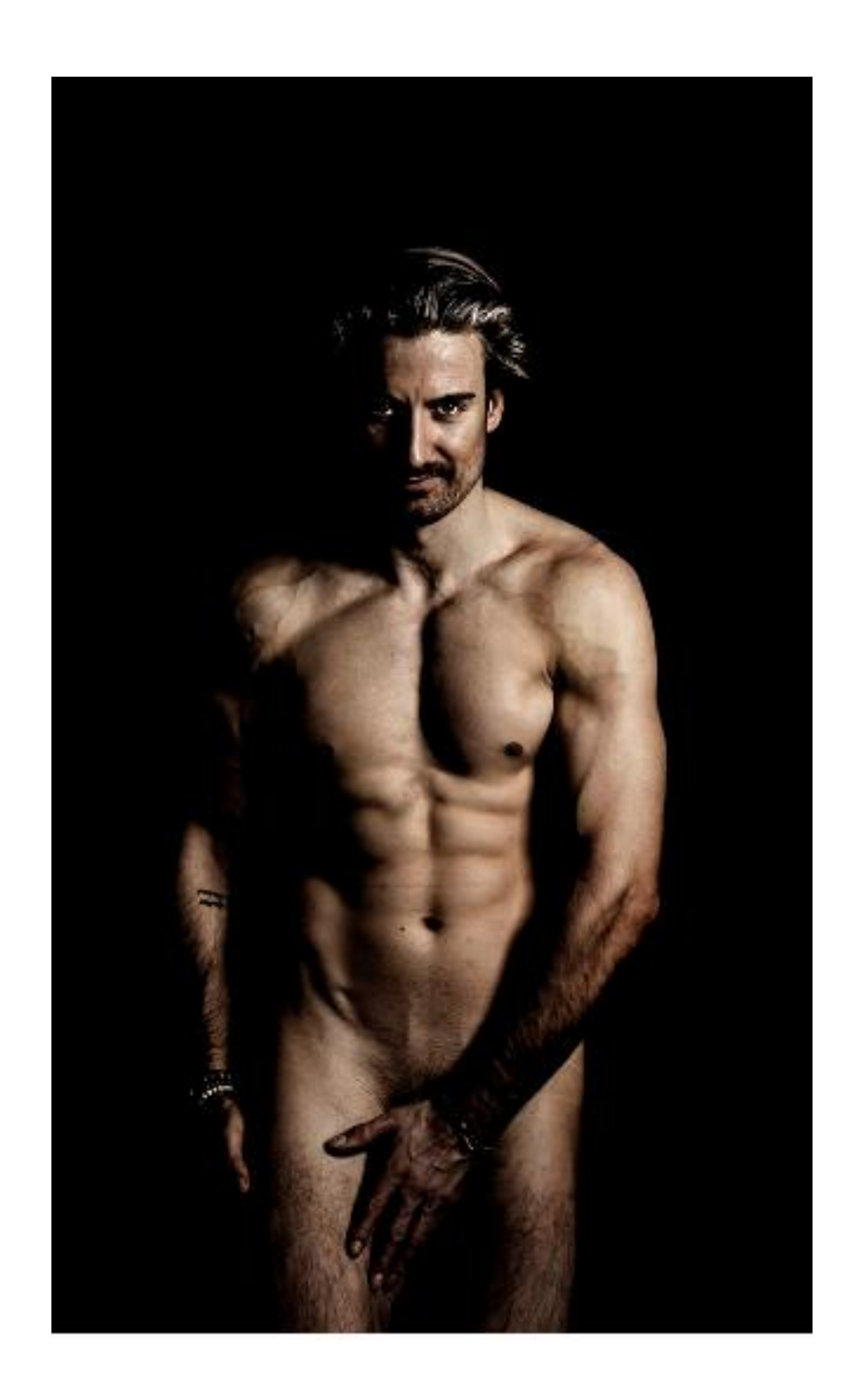
Any artist who wishes to fully understand the dichotomy of the human form has to rise to the challenge of presenting the splendor of the masculine. When you pay attention to details, what you can achieve as an artist is quite remarkable.

Here is an Indian ink and watercolor painting done by an amateur female artist of her boyfriend with everything in proper proportion.





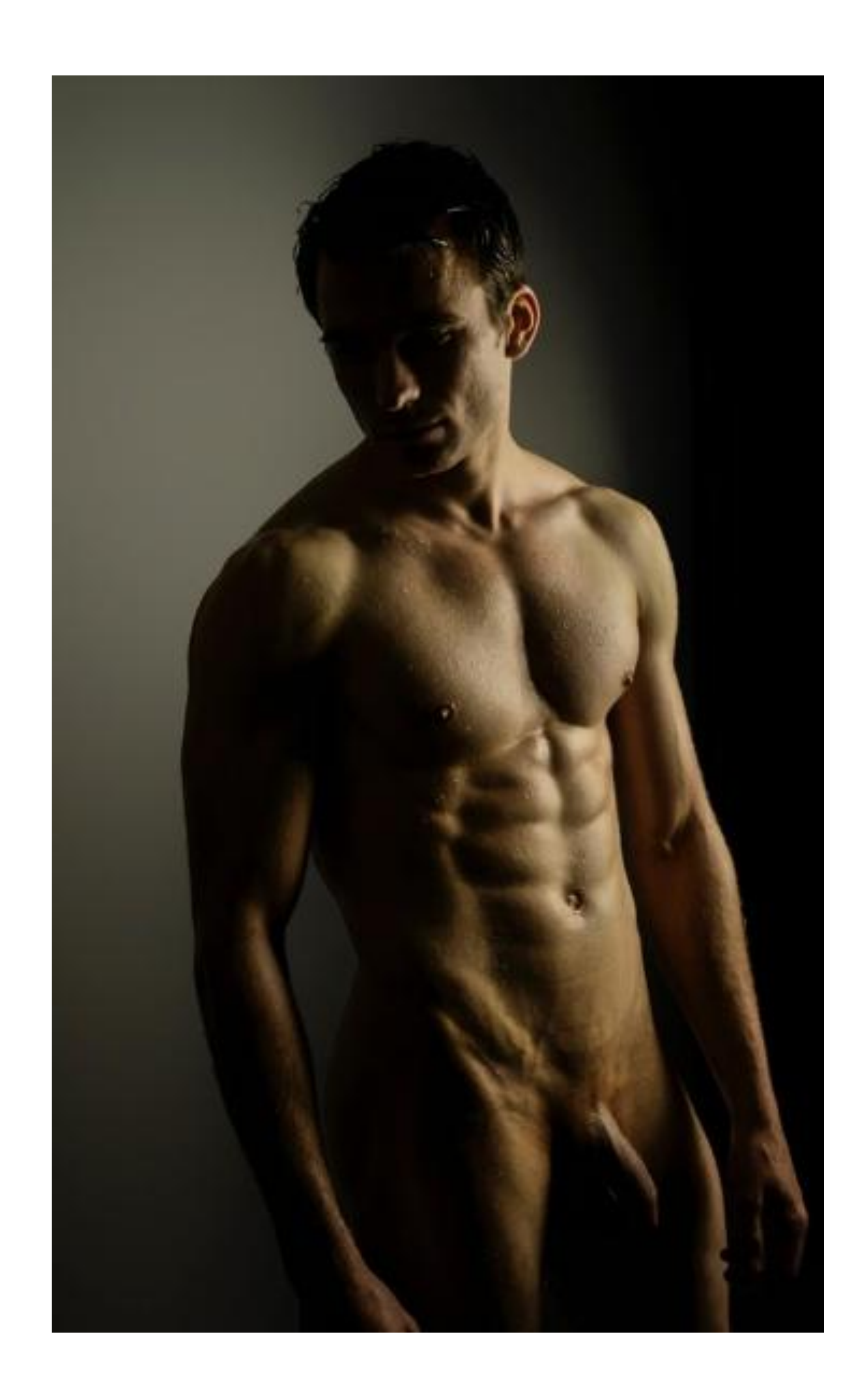


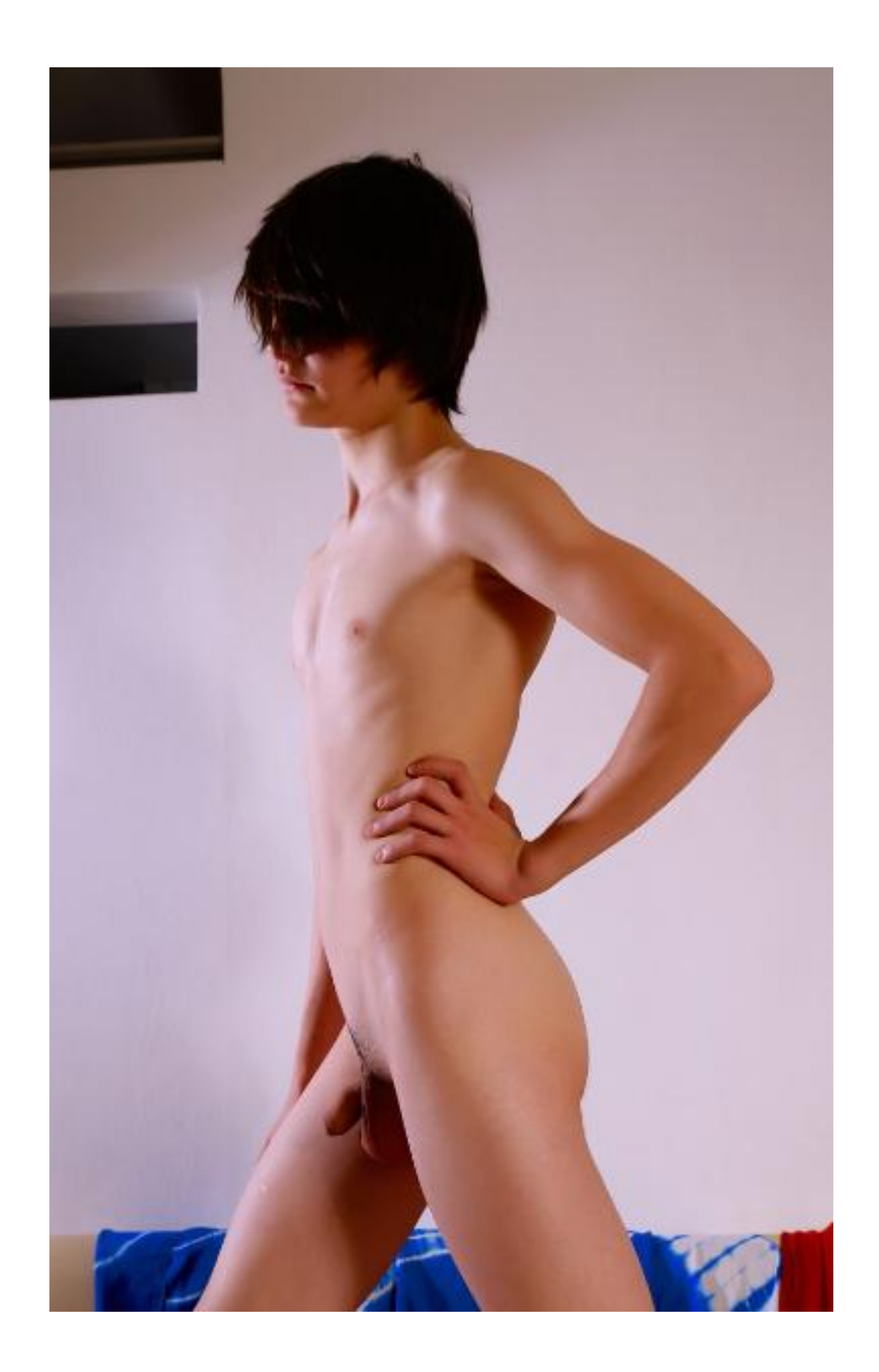




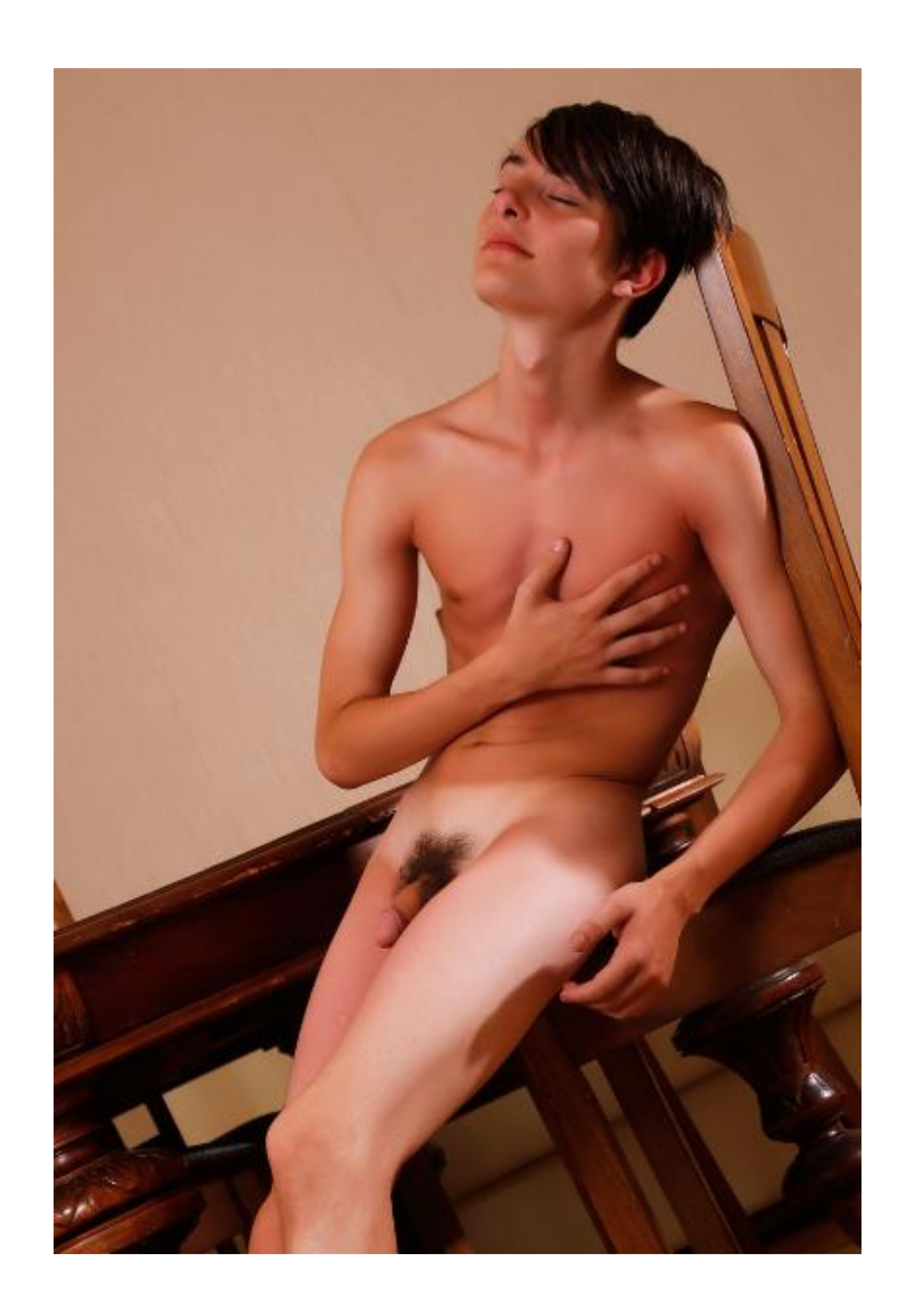










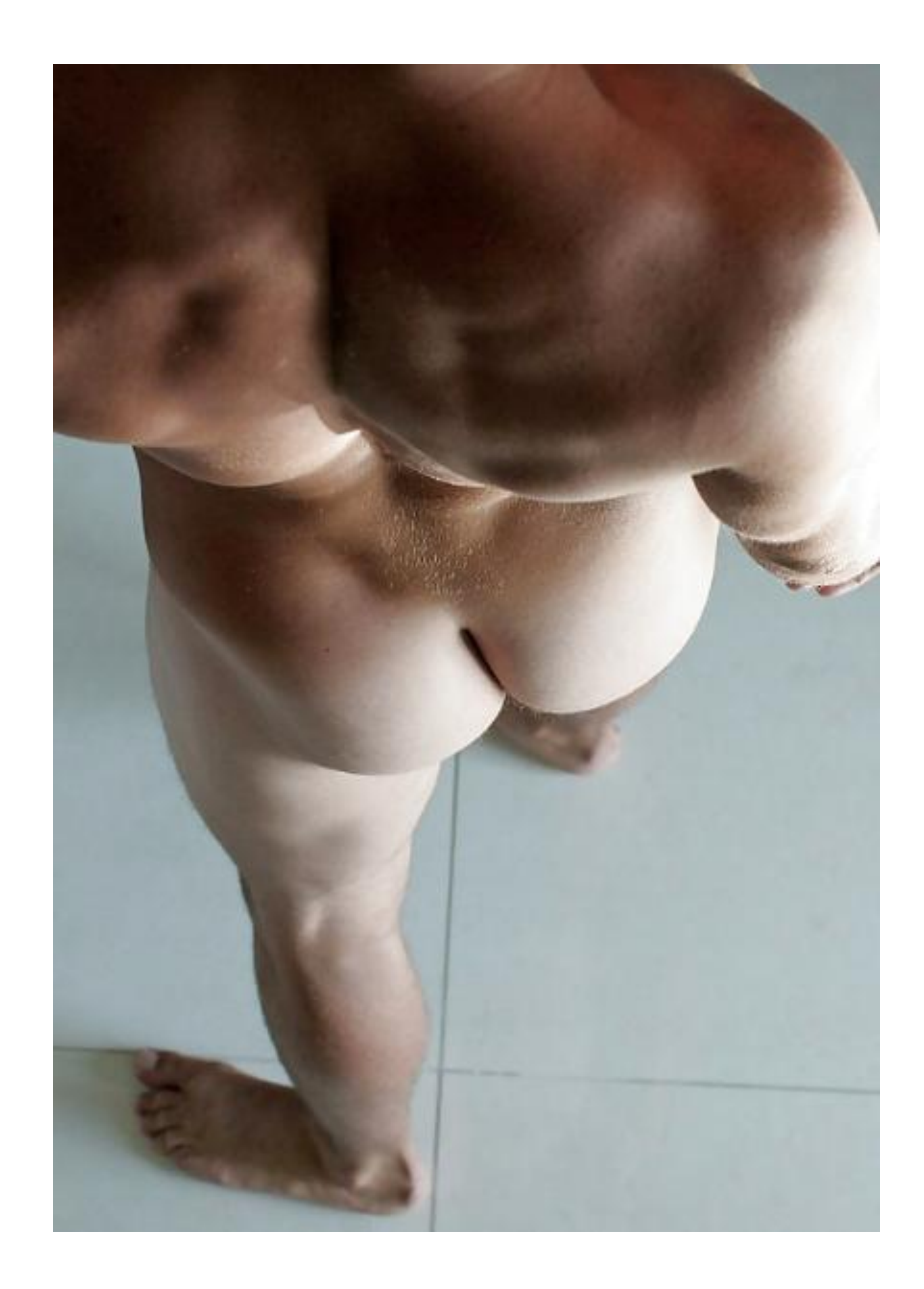


































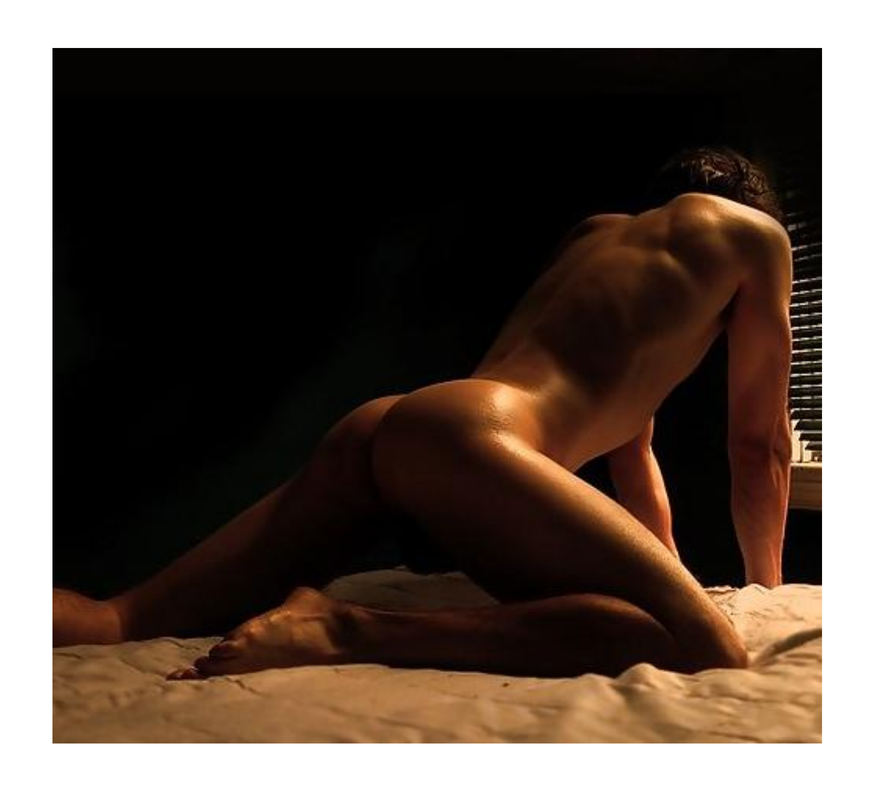










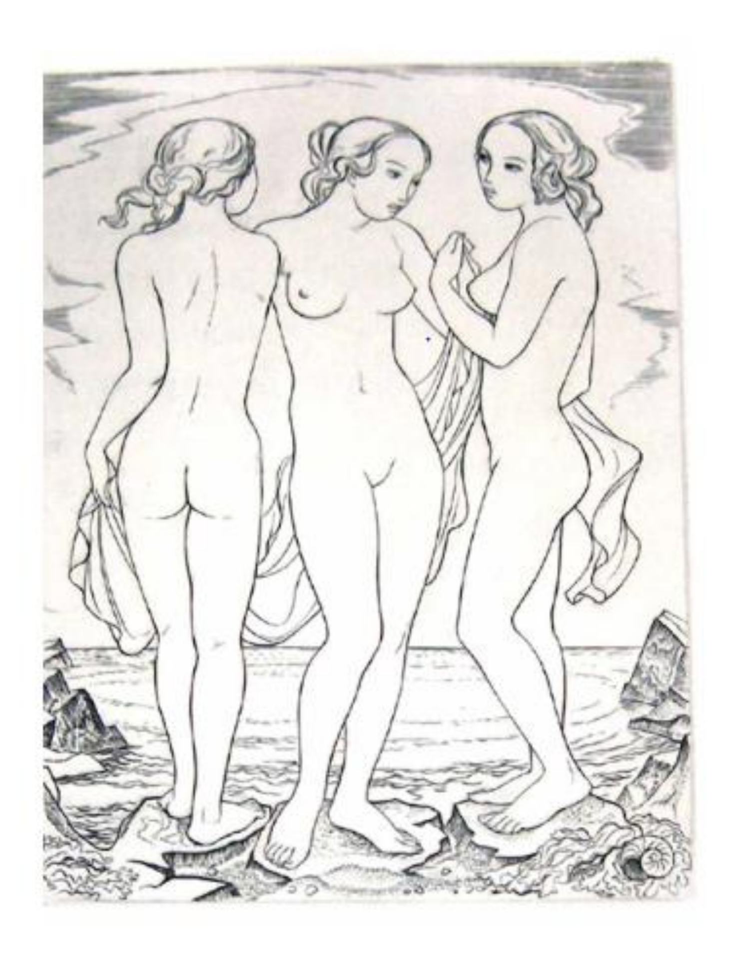








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Art Works from the Modern Era

Pictorials of Henri Matisse with some of his models



Henri Matisse with model Carla Avogadro, Nice, 1942













Henri Matisse with model Hélène Adant, Vence, 1946





Henri Matisse with model, Nice, 1949

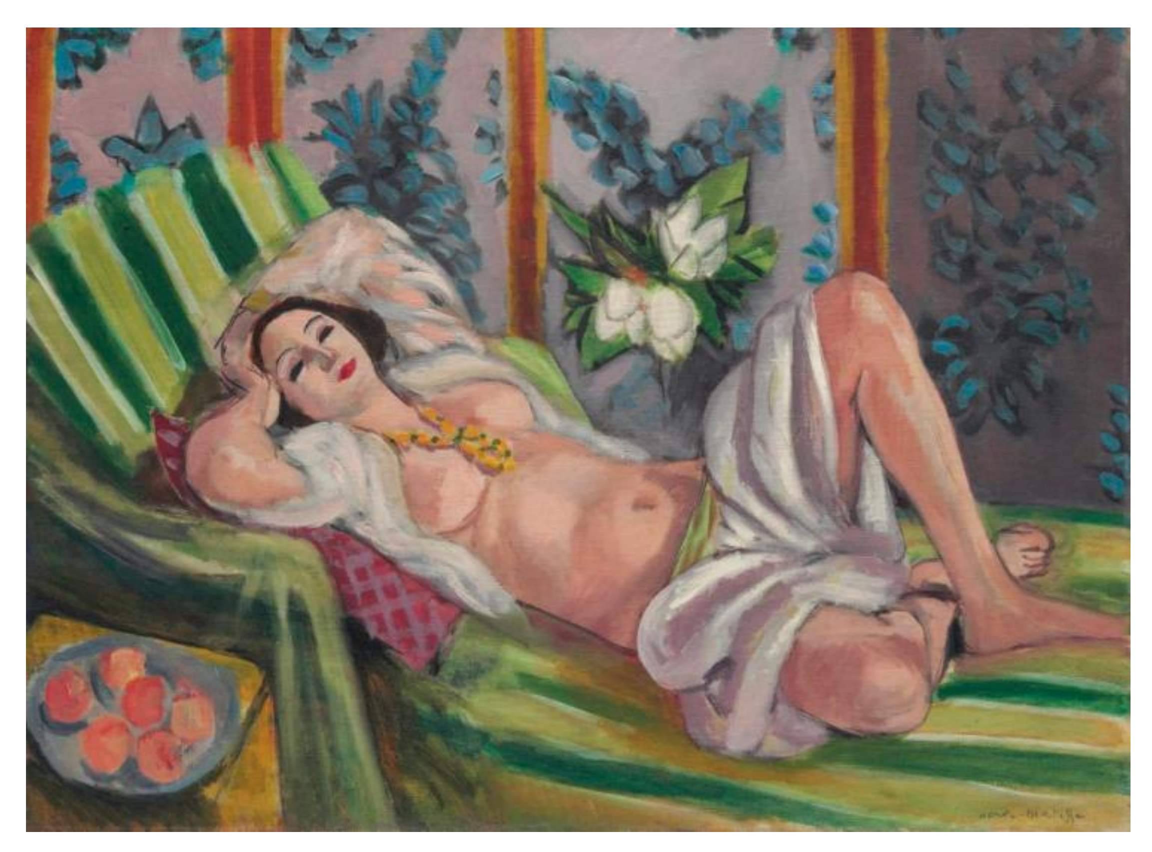
Stop that … it tickles!



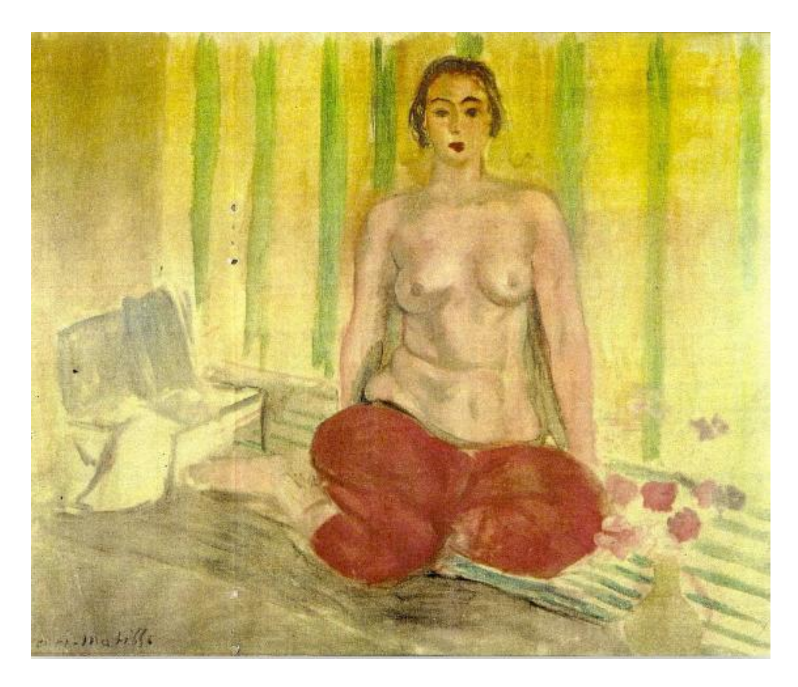
Nine Odalisques by Henri Matisse

Odalisque: 1. (n) a female slave or concubine in a harem, especially one in the seraglio of the Sultan of Turkey.

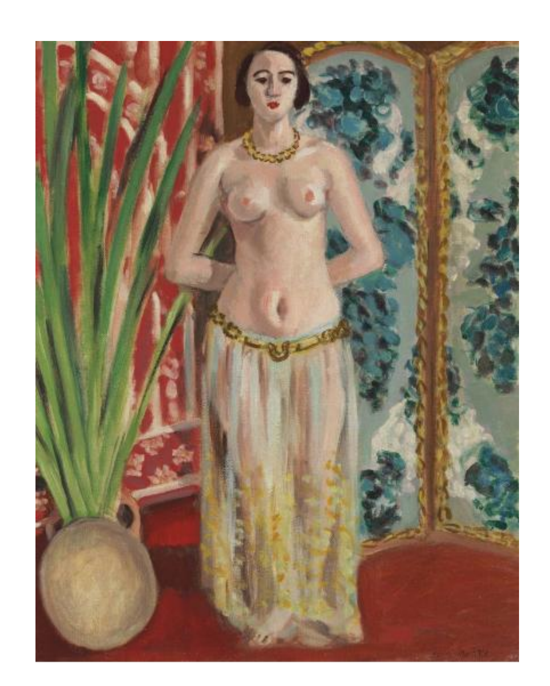
2. An artistic style of representing the female form in the style of a lounging woman, especially with an arabesque theme, and with texture and colors in their surroundings.



$ 50 million odalisque from the Rockefeller Collection



Odalisque in Red Pants – stolen and now returned



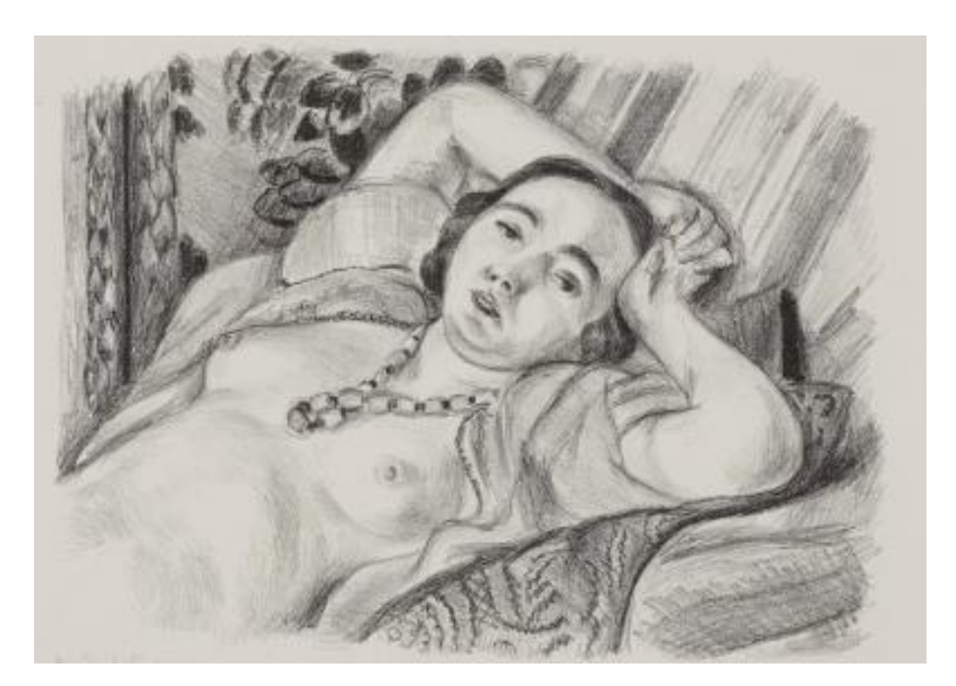
Odalisque, mains dans le dos, 1923



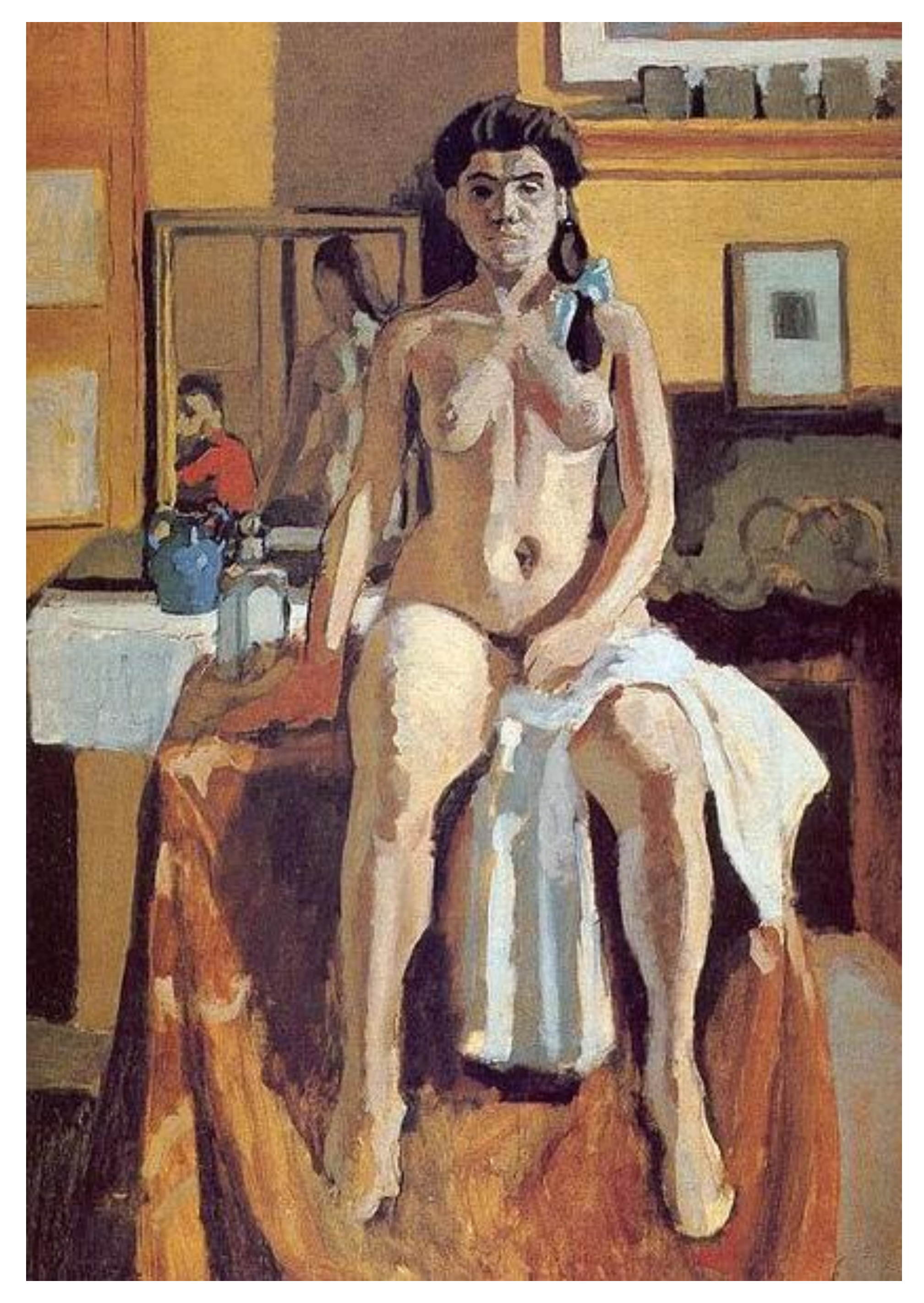
Grande Odalisque à culotte bayadère, 1925, MOMA



Lithograph Odalisque a la culotte de satin rouge, 1925



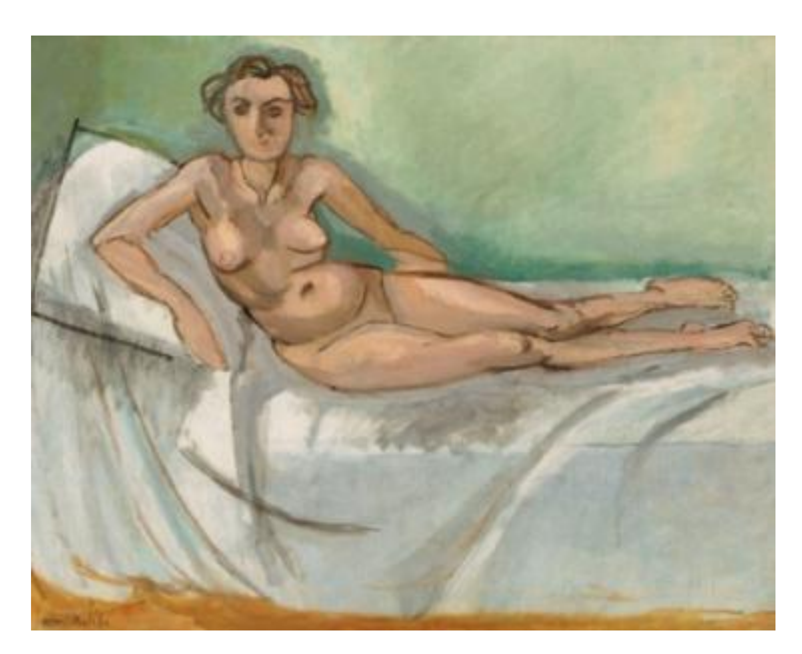
Lithograph Odalisque au collier, 1923



Carmalita, 1904, Museum of Fine Art, Boston



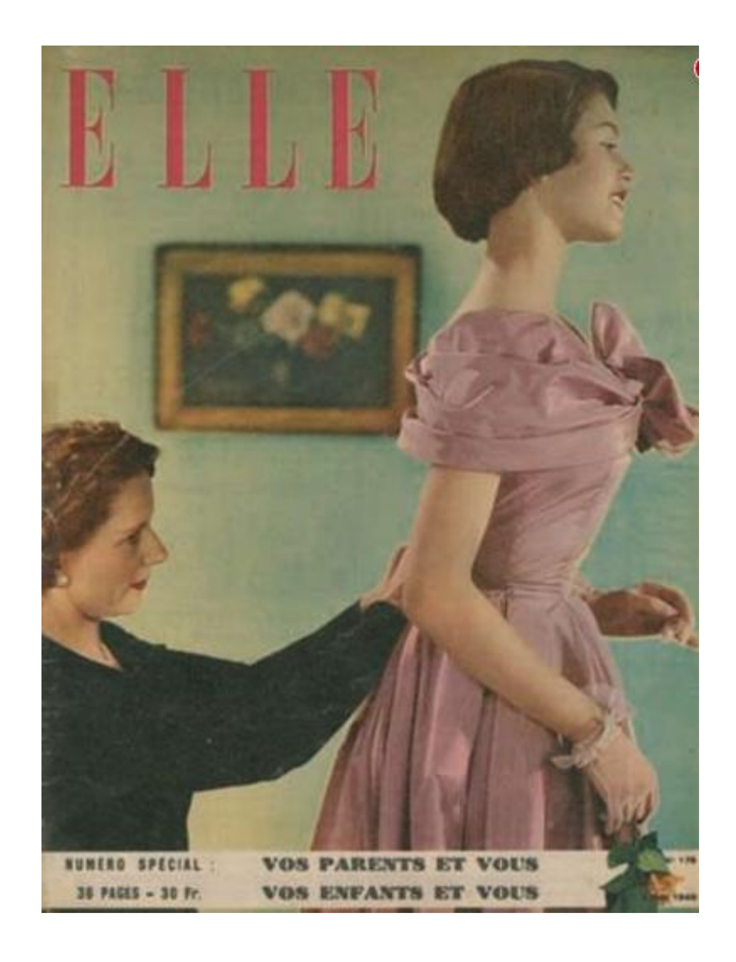
Nu sur Chaise longue, (worth $ 2.4 million)



Nu demi couché, (worth $ 2 million)

BB …

In 1949 a fifteen year old Bridget Bardot appeared on the cover of Elle Magazine in France. She was an accomplished ballerina.



Born in Paris to a wealthy family, the ELLE cover caught the eye of the film maker Roger Vadim, who brought her into the world of cinema. In 1952, at age 18, she would marry Vadim.

In 1953 Bridget Bardot, then 19 years old and having already appeared in several films, walked the beach at Cannes in her bathing suit …



and won the hearts of many a Cannes Film Festival goer.

In 1956 she starred in the Vadim film *And God Created Woman,* probably her most famous film. It might also be considered one of her most infamous films. *And God Created Woman* is a must see as far as films are concerned.



Bridget Bardot and Roger Vadim divorced in 1957. The stated reason for the divorce was Bardot's affairs with other men. She was married several times and has become infamous for her personal causes.

Throughout her career Bardot appeared in 47 films between 1952 and 1973.

Poetry by Contemporary Poets

i am a fool by Wing Wing Fung

i am a fool
for believing that life
is intertwined and
created to my taste.

i am a fool
for believing and falling
for the micro problems
that inhibit my human experience
of the present ....

drowned in thoughts,
feelings, and things
i have been conditioned
to be my reality,

i have lost touch
with enjoying the present.
the mindless moment of the all.

to be lost amidst bliss
and find pleasure
between the self induced chaos.

turn off …
the jarring feelings of anxiety
and enjoy the
contemporary way of life

of being free of primal traumas
and blocking out … modern problems.

no longer shall we confine ourselves
within our own mental prisons

and see things for what they are.

see our life for what it is
- a mindless,
comical,
self controlled reality
engulfed in comfort,
safety,
and peace ....

These Unfulfilled Thoughts … by Alyssa Yu

Forcefully my body
was dragged through
the dusted room.

My stitched rag frictioned
against the repelling floor …
dead skin rapidly
drifted off my body.

Salted water leisurely
drained off of my pale expression,
my eyes reluctantly
stared at the ignoble man.

Gazing above, the clouded sky,
a slight of light radiated
on the surface of my skin,
drying the salted water.

Sitting on the turbid ground,
resting myself …
hope …
peace …
home …

family …

friends…

these unfulfilled thoughts

revolved in my imagination.

Tears falling, drifting and evaporating.

The gun was propelled

into my aching hands.

I held it, sobbing.

How could I be holding this?

The black were shot vividly in sight.

Holding the gun,

hopelessly

placing my palm towards my eyes

Poems by Aki Kurosawa

I Had a Pink Bike

When I was a little girl
I had a pink bike …
the tires would spin and whirl.
I rode it everywhere I like –

I rode it very fast!
The boys would race me,
but almost always I'd be last
and I would watch them flee.

gaily laughing all the time at me …
but I would just smile, thinking
how it must hurt to be a boy
bouncing on his bike …

but a girl can whirl along on her's
and not mind it at all …

Pumpkin the Cat

Pumpkin … my chisana Neiko,
she use to wander across
the top of our fence.
Our chisai inu would bark, bark
bark at it – but my Pumpkin

she just ignored him. She knew
he had nothing important to say
to her as she went on her way.

The boy cats would try to
follow her across the fence –
but would get unnerved and topple off
and our dog would chase them away.
They would never come back again.

If you could not keep up with Pumpkin
… what use were you to her?

But Not Always!

At school we all wore
plain blue uniforms …
every day, the same way –
but not always!

And underneath,
they were supposed to be all white,
but sometimes they were red,
or pink, or blue,
or yellow or black,
or no color at all …

which was the best …
don’t you think?

If you had to sit every day,
The same way –
but not always!

They Make a Rasp of it!

You see, I have these dreams …
of being held down ….
against my will …
and being tickled, here and there
and everywhere …

But when I tell my
boyfriends what I dream about

… they just don’t understand.

They make a rasp of it,
and turn my dream
into a nightmare.

Boys don’t understand girls
… they just don’t want to.

A History Lesson by Anina Robb

I fell in love with my History teacher
when I was twelve
and parted my hair down the middle.
I never expected him to fall back.

My teacher directed—
no one can know, touch me here.
I bathed in the secret of being kissed
for the first time.

I looked sideways at my reflection,
how my stomach curved past my hip bones.
I parted my hair on the side.

In the bathroom stall, I'd unfold his notes
and read them slowly,
holding each word in my mouth.
Sometimes, I'd kiss my palm.

I knew something was true:
my teacher would never leave his wife –

and I hated my young body
for being full of so many holes.

In the mirror all I could see
were my teacher’s freckled hands
touching my growing breasts,
and all I wanted was
for my body to become as small as a breath,
so no one could teach me again.

At Café Trieste at San Pablo by Catherine Simpson

I like gathering up these images
So I can tell you about them later:
The dark red walls, the low-hanging
Lamps, the marble-topped little
Tables and the chairs with spindly
Legs. There's a father in a plaid
Newsboy hat with his daughter hanging
From a contraption on his chest: she
Points her forefinger like Michelangelo's
Adam, with the same quiet wakening.
A man in a red cardigan and with a
White mustache glances over at me, and
Then I think of him in some kitchen later
Tonight, a gray-haired woman bustling
At the stove while he peeks in the fridge, and
He says, There was this red-haired girl
At Caffe Trieste today down on San Pablo,
A real tall lady, and all she did for hours
Was stare and stare at people.

Blossoms of Orange by Pamela Biery

Flat and tanned, the pelvis bones protrude,
a fragrant orange blossom could stand
using her navel for a vase
in the white heat of a summer sun.

But at eight and a half months, the stomach
is as taut as a Valencia Navel, round and firm.
Where once the blossom of an orange
might have stood, now a stem,
just a slight protrusion on a snug, round surface.

Orange rinds
with porous divots and layers of wrapping, unpeel easily
once so uniform and glowing, now cast aside
for the fruit revealed.

Yet, laying in the sun
the pelvis bones still protrude,
revealing an awkward space, neither full nor empty,
like a small concave bowl
of sweet marmalade.

the galaxies of her consciousness by Carolina Neomy

the galaxies of her consciousness
hosts the most utmost theatrical ambitions
that incandescence like an aurora borealis
and drive me to an excruciating lust
since they are only visible
in the rare moments that her
her eyes are eclipsed by the stars
and the moon
and all the love she is able to showcase
from her staggering nebulae
when she meets my own

Poetry from Times past

The Drunken Boat by Artur Rimbaud

As I was going down impassive Rivers,
I no longer felt myself guided by haulers:
Yelping redskins had taken them as targets
And had nailed them naked to colored stakes.

I was indifferent to all crews,
The bearer of Flemish wheat or English cottons
When with my haulers this uproar stopped
The Rivers let me go where I wanted.

Into the furious lashing of the tides
More heedless than children's brains the other winter
I ran! And loosened Peninsulas
Have not undergone a more triumphant hubbub

The storm blessed my sea vigils
Lighter than a cork I danced on the waves
That are called eternal rollers of victims,
Ten nights, without missing the stupid eye of the lighthouses!

Sweeter than the flesh of hard apples is to children

The green water penetrated my hull of fir
And washed me of spots of blue wine
And vomit, scattering rudder and grappling-hook

And from then on I bathed in the Poem
Of the Sea, infused with stars and lactescent,
Devouring the azure verses; where, like a pale elated
Piece of flotsam, a pensive drowned figure sometimes sinks;

Where, suddenly dyeing the blueness, delirium
And slow rhythms under the streaking of daylight,
Stronger than alcohol, vaster than our lyres,
The bitter redness of love ferments!

I know the skies bursting with lightning, and the waterspouts
And the surf and the currents; I know the evening,
And dawn as exalted as a flock of doves
And at times I have seen what man thought he saw!

I have seen the low sun spotted with mystic horrors,
Lighting up, with long violet clots,
Resembling actors of very ancient dramas,
The waves rolling far off their quivering of shutters!

I have dreamed of the green night with dazzled snows
A kiss slowly rising to the eyes of the sea,

The circulation of unknown saps,
And the yellow and blue awakening of singing phosphorous!

I followed during pregnant months the swell,
Like hysterical cows, in its assault on the reefs,
Without dreaming that the luminous feet of the Marys
Could constrain the snout of the wheezing Oceans!

I struck against, you know, unbelievable Floridas
Mingling with flowers panthers' eyes and human
Skin! Rainbows stretched like bridal reins
Under the horizon of the seas to greenish herds!

I have seen enormous swamps ferment, fish-traps
Where a whole Leviathan rots in the rushes!
Avalanches of water in the midst of a calm,
And the distances cataracting toward the abyss!

Glaciers, suns of silver, nacreous waves, skies of embers!
Hideous strands at the end of brown gulfs
Where giant serpents devoured by bedbugs
Fall down from gnarled trees with black scent!

I should have liked to show children those sunfish
Of the blue wave, the fish of gold, the singing fish.
—Foam of flowers rocked my drifting

And ineffable winds winged me at times.

At times a martyr weary of poles and zones,
The sea, whose sob created my gentle roll,
Brought up to me her dark flowers with yellow suckers
And I remained, like a woman on her knees...

Resembling an island tossing on my sides the quarrels
And droppings of noisy birds with yellow eyes
And I sailed on, when through my fragile ropes
Drowned men sank backward to sleep!

Now I, a boat lost in the foliage of caves,
Thrown by the storm into the birdless air
I whose water-drunk carcass would not have been rescued
By the Monitors and the Hanseatic sailboats;

Free, smoking, topped with violet fog,
I who pierced the reddening sky like a wall,
Bearing, delicious jam for good poets
Lichens of sunlight and mucus of azure,

Who ran, spotted with small electric moons,
A wild plank, escorted by black seahorses,
When Julys beat down with blows of cudgels
The ultramarine skies with burning funnels;

I, who trembled, hearing at fifty leagues off
The moaning of the Behemoths in heat and the thick Maelstroms,
Eternal spinner of the blue immobility
I miss Europe with its ancient parapets!

I have seen sidereal archipelagos! and islands
Whose delirious skies are open to the sea-wanderer:
—Is it in these bottomless nights that you sleep and exile yourself,
Million golden birds, o future Vigor? –

But, in truth, I have wept too much! Dawns are heartbreaking.
Every moon is atrocious and every sun bitter.
Acrid love has swollen me with intoxicating torpor
O let my keel burst! O let me go into the sea!

If I want a water of Europe, it is the black
Cold puddle where in the sweet-smelling twilight
A squatting child full of sadness releases
A boat as fragile as a May butterfly.

No longer can I, bathed in your languor, o waves,
Follow in the wake of the cotton boats,
Nor cross through the pride of flags and flames,
Nor swim under the terrible eyes of prison ships.

Dada Poems by Harry Crosby

INVOCATION TO THE MAD QUEEN

I would you were the hollow ship
fashioned to bear the cargo of my love
the unrelenting glove
hurled in defiance at our blackest world
or that great banner mad unfurled
the poet plants upon the hill of time
or else amphora for the gold of life
liquid and naked as a virgin wife.

Yourself the Prize
I gird with Fire
The Great White Ruin
Of my Desire.

I burn to gold
fierce and unerring as a conquering sword
I bum to gold
fierce and undaunted as a lion lord
seeking your Bed
and leave to them the
burning of the dead.

ENQUETE TUMULTS AND CHANCES

Why do you prefer to live outside America ?
I prefer to live outside America
because in America the Stars were all suffocated
inside
because I do not wish to devote myself to perpetual
hypocrisy
because outside America there is nothing to
remind me of my childhood
because I prefer perihelion to aphelion
because I love flagons of wine
because I am an enemy of society and here I can
hunt with other enemies of society
because I want to be in at the death (of Europe)
because I like tumults and chances better than
security
because I prefer transitional orgasms to atlantic
monthlies
because I am not coprophagous
because I would rather be an eagle gathering
sun than a spider gathering poison
because by living outside of America New York
can still remain for me the City of a Thousand
and One Nights
because the Rivers of Suicide are more inviting

than the Prairies of Prosperity
because I prefer Mad Queens to Mild Virgins

SUNSTROKE

each Color changed her dress
and notions difficult to dream
(when pencils play their
parts preponderous)
tanged Sunward
with ladies preferring
their breasts
no yeast suggests the
ruffled tenor of the
dragoman
who wishes on the hay
one last encounter
irrelevant of pause
(why change her drawers
to make the rhyme
less difficult to see)
the soot on ivory carpets
mongol-colored in the brain
the bitter rain
beyond the destination
of the heart

beyond the destination
of the brain
beyond the destination
of the brain
the sleeping goat-bugs
know not any avatar
and where the Russian
orifice is samovar
there Red Sea Rimbaud
guards his Aden Caravan
and Verlaine trembles
to the touch of trains
          it rains
          it rains
to mourn the ocean giants
buried deep
among the rankled seaweed
sharp with frost (aerial)
here buttercups shall
robin out the thread
that led beyond the
furcoat pleasures of a night
here gopher lights
shall fall and crawl
from one small suitcab
built for two

and now the shell holes
dwindle into fences
white as cherry lit with
snow
or carcassonned in
strength unyoked to
ivory plants that
turquoise airily to sea
(the waves are paper
bags to burst)
up that great Step to Sun
(zythum to aardvark
and back again)
here xebecs tell of toadstools
tabled out in pride
here xebecs tell of one lost bride
whose solaced eyes once
wept
to see the bursting parasols
migrate
between the two necessities of life
(and if her tossing hair
should catch
upon an edge of cloud)
and hearts in fear inurned
murmur her name

and dream sharp arrows
squeezed to stick upon
the Targe of Sun
or play at proposition
with the maid who gilly-gillies to the
S of mountain
railroad tracks
or rides astride their backs
voluptual as books in June
and in my bed
the Mad Queen lies
the Mad Queen of the bedroom eyes
the Idol I idolatrize
Color explodes
where once the feet of
Tripod Time danced wantonly
to bugle notes
(of unremembered telephones)
queer Goya tailcoats
sneezing into soot
queer rabbits falling
from the Flagpole of the year
and breasts spurt flowers
cramoisy and dark
and nestling turtledoves
are seen through fog

beyond the crow-black roads
Color Explodes
and if a proper noun
invigorates our teeth
can we not say
Black Black
I wake to Sun!

IN MADNESS

not in calm weather
faint breezes calm summer
when clouds have fled from the sky
and she lies with her hair and her dress undone
asleep in the hay in the sun
frail as a feather
I say not in this weather
but when the trees are bare
when the wind roars
when it whirls up the grass
        on the ground
when it drives the rain forward
when the sound of the thunder
        and slamming of doors
warns of mad weather
I say in this weather

(black out of doors
black meadows
black raindrops
black weather)
in this weather
when the storm is howling across the sky
then shall the Mad Queen fly to her love
proud as a feather
proud as sun
their hearts mad beating
        in unison

Surreal Poems by Paul Eluard

Like an Image (Fragment)

Armour of prey the black perfume shines
Trees wear an almond landscape hair
Cradle of ail the landscapes the keys the dice
The plains of care and mountains of alabaster
The lamps of the suburbs, bashfulness, storms
Unforeseen gestures devoted to fire
The paths separating the sea from its drowned
Ail the undecipherable riddles.

The thistle flower builds a castle
It climbs the ladder of the wind
And death's head seeds
Ebony stars on the glistening panes
Promise ail to their lovers
The others who pretend
Maintain the leaden order.

Silent misery man
His early morning face
Opens like a prison
His eyes are heads cut off
His Angers serve to count

To measure to take to convince
His Angers know how to bind him.

Ruin of the public
Its emotion is in tatters
Its enthusiasm damped
The ornaments suspended to the terrors of thunder
Livid pastures where rocks leap out
To put an end to it
A tomb adorned with the prettiest trinkets
A silken veil over the langour of lust
To put an end to it
With a single blow of an axe in the back.

In the ravines of sleep
Silence rears its children
Here is the fatal sound that burst the ear-drums
The dusty death of colours
Idiocy
Here is the first idler
And the unconscious movements of insomnia
The ear the reeds to curve back like a helmet
The exacting ear the enemy forgotten in the mist
And the inexhaustible silence
Which overthrows nature by not naming it
Which sets up smiling snares

Or frightening absences
Breaks ail the mirrors of the lips.

On the open sea in delicate arms
On fine days the waves in full sail
And the blood leads to everything
It is a square without a statue
Without rowers without a black flag
A rainbow-coloured naked square
Where ail the wandering flowers
Flowers at the mercy of the light
Have concealed fairylands of daring
It is a jewel of indifference
Within the scope of every heart
The chiseled jewel of laughter
It is a mysterious house
Where children baffle men

On the outskirts of hope
To no purpose
Calm creates a vacuum.

Les Gertrude Hoffman Girls

Gertrude, Dorothy, Mary, Claire, Alberta,
Charlotte, Dorothy, Ruth, Catherine, Emma,

Louisa, Margaret, Ferrai, Harriet, Sarah,
Florence in the nude, Margaret, Toots and Thelma.

Beauties of night, beauties of fire and beauties of rain,
The trembling heart, the hidden hand and windlike eyes,
You show me the movements of light,
You exchange a glance for a springtime.

The girth of your waist for a flower's circuit,
Boldness and danger for your unsullied flesh,
You exchange love for the shivers of steel.
And the unconscious laugh for dawn's promises.

Your dances are the fearful whirlpool of my dreams
And I fall and my downfall perpetuates my life
The space beneath your feet is increasingly vast,
Wonders, you dance upon the springs of the day.

All the Rights

Simulate
The flowered shadow of flowers hung from spring
The shortest day of the year and the esqimau night
The agony of autumnal visionaries
The odour of roses the wise stinging of nettles
Stretch transparent linen

Into the clearing of your eyes
Display the ravages of fire its works of inspiration
And the paradise of its ash
The abstract phenomenon struggling with the clock's hands
The wounds of truth the oaths that cannot fold
Display yourself

You can go out in crystal robes
Your beauty goes on and on
Your eyes shed tears caresses smiles
Your eyes have no secrets
And are limitless.

You Are Everywhere

You rise up and the water opens out
You lie down and the water spreads

You are the water turned away from its abysses
You are the earth that takes root

And upon which ail things assume a form
You blow bubbles of silence in the wilderness of noise

You play nocturnal hymns upon the rainbow's strings
You are everywhere and abolish ail pathways

You sacrifice time
To the perennial youth of the rigorous flame
That veils nature by reproducing it

O woman you give birth to a body always the same

Your own

You are its very likeness.

Necessity

Without great ceremony on earth
Near those who keep their poise
On this misery of ail repose
Right near the good way
In the dust of the serious
I establish relations between man and woman
Between the smeltings of the sun and the bag of bees
Between the enchanted grottoes and the avalanche
Between the care-rimmed eyes and the pealing laughter
Between the heraldic blackbird and the star of garlic
Between the leaden thread and the sound of the wind
Between the fountain of ants and the growing of strawberries
Between the chalcedony and winter in pins

Between the eye-ball tree and the recorded mimicry

Between the carotid and the ghost of salt

Between the auracaria and the head of a dwarf

Between the branching rails and the speckled dove

Between man and woman

Between my solitude and you.



Cradled Pamphlet by Salvador Dali

Perduring pamphlet
unjustly refusing
a cup
any portuguese cup
that is made nowadays
in a plate factory
because a cup
resembles by its shape
a gentle municipal arab antimony
set up at the reaches of the neighbourhood
like the glance of my lovely Gala
the glance of my lovely Gala
smell of a morning band
like the epithelial tissue of my lovely Gala
her clownish lamplighter's epithelial tissue
yes I will repeat it a thousand times
Perduring pamphlet
unjustly refusing
a cup
any portuguese cup
that is made nowadays
in a plate factory
because a cup
resembles by its shape

a gentle municipal arab antimony
set up at the reaches of the neighbourhood
like the glance of my lovely Gala
the glance of my lovely Gala
smell of a morning band
like the epithelial tissue of my lovely Gala
her clownish lamplighter's epithelial tissue

The Very Image by Rene Magritte

An image of my grandmother
her head appearing upside-down upon a cloud
the cloud transfixed on the steeple
of a deserted railway-station
far away
An image of an aqueduct
with a dead crow hanging from the first arch
a modern-style chair from the second
a fir-tree lodged in the third
and the whole scene sprinkled with snow
An image of the piano-tuner
with a basket of prawns on his shoulder
and a firescreen under his arm
his moustache made of clay-clotted twigs
and his cheeks daubed with wine
An image of an aeroplane
the propellor is rashers of bacon
the wings are of reinforced lard
the tail is made of paper-clips
the pilot is a wasp
An image of the painter
with his left hand in a bucket
and his right hand stroking a cat
as he lies in bed

with a stone beneath his head

And ail these images

and many others

are arranged like waxworks

in model bird-cages

about six inches high.

Two Poems by Andre Breton

Postman Cheval

We are the birds always charmed by you from the top of these belvederes
And that each night form a blossoming branch between your shoulders
and the arms of your well beloved wheel-barrow
Which we tear out swifter than sparks at your wrist
We are the sighs of the glass statue that raises itself on its elbow when
man sleeps
And shining holes appear in his bed
Holes through which stags with coral antlers can be seen in a glade
And naked women at the bottom of a mine
You remembered then you got up you got out of the train
Without glancing at the locomotive attacked by immense barometric
roots
Complaining about its murdered boilers in the virgin forest
Its funnels smoking jacinths and moulting blue snakes
Then we went on, plants subject to metamorphosis
Each night making signs that man may understand
While his house collapses and he stands amazed before the singular
packing-cases
Sought after by his bed with the corridor and the staircase
The staircase goes on without end
It leads to a millstone door it enlarges suddenly in a public square
It is made of the backs of swans with a spreading wing for banisters

It turns inside out as though it were going to bite itself
But no, it is content at the sound of our feet to open ail its steps like
    drawers
Drawers of bread drawers of wine drawers of soap drawers of ice drawers
    of stairs
Drawers of flesh with handsfull of hair
Without turning round you seized the trowel with which breasts are
    made
We smiled at you you held us round the waist
And we took up the positions of your pleasure
Motionless under our lids for ever as woman delights to see man
After having made love.

Revolving Lights

The russet toga that collects the lozenge stars
Hurts at a touch but the charming funeral
Which the birds follow has hardly taken place
Before I go from depth to depth

From the first this is the best of reed-pipe tunes
It re-sheaths its sword in the sand-banks of hearts
Then the burning candie in the heights
Of my room copulates with the lictor's axe

Likewise there are sins replaced

The viper eyes the breasts of the young woman
He only has truely bared them to the world
Breaking away from the air the rose's thorn

Then the abandoned pedestal of a minstrel's bust
Falls a victim to butterflies and their followers
The great rockets of sap beneath the public-parks
And the moss that grows over my desk as I sleep

In an office the American punch was wonderful
Not every day do we bathe in our own blood
The ear calculates the days the pretty trade-marks
The sea-gull on the white horse's back

These are cavalry attacks upon the right
Eternally rebellious Of the shudders of spears
Is made the angel who âges in terrible virginity
Like electric light in the trees

The drum the drum for ever muffled
A fairy gorse sweeps the diamonds ofî her dress
The story of the grinding of a seed more bland than coffee
When I hold you on the battlements in the great mystery

Cats by Charles Baudelaire



They are alike, prim scholar and perfervid lover:

When comes the season of decay, they both decide

Upon sweet, husky cats to be the household pride;

Cats choose, like them, to sit, and like them, shudder.



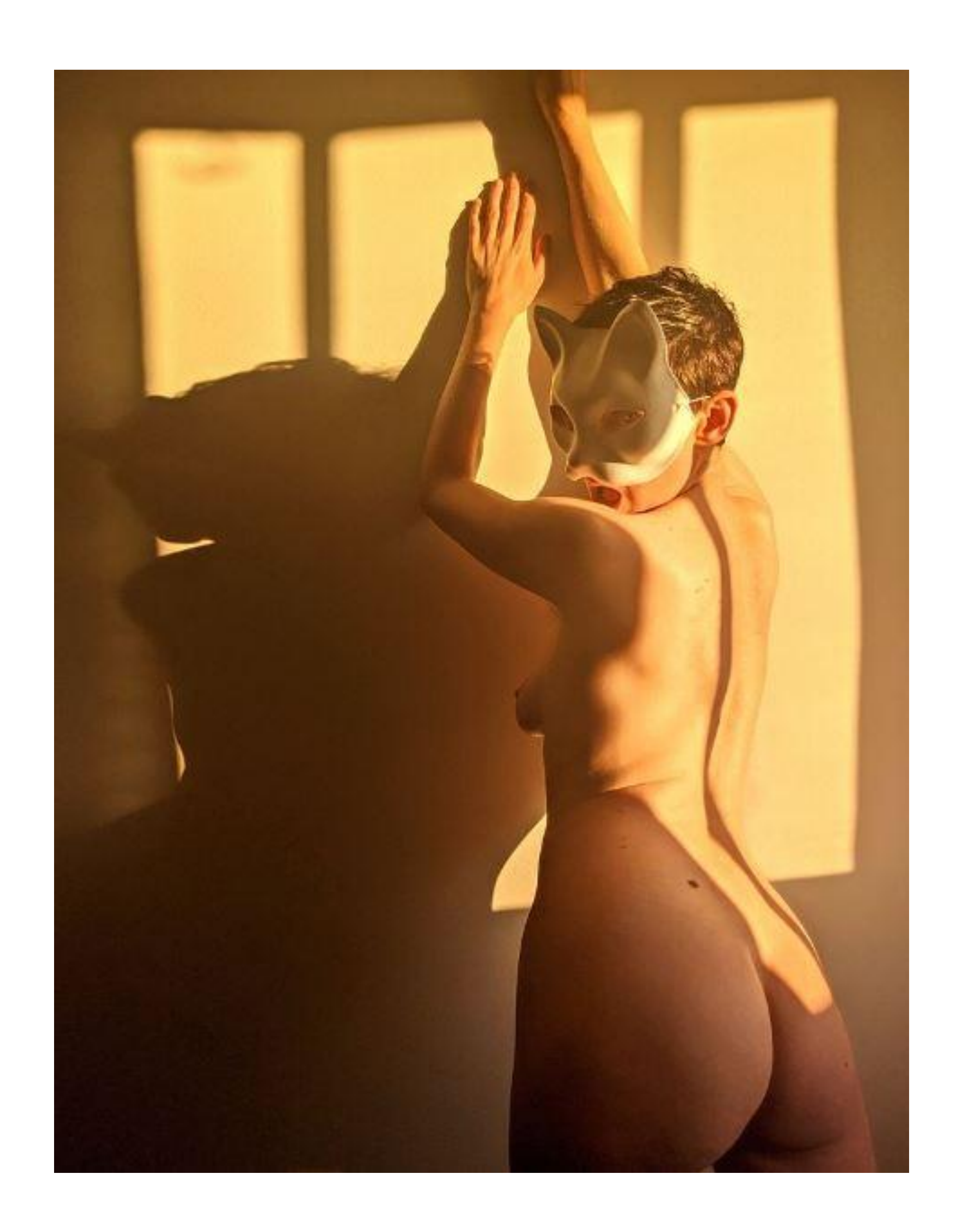
Like partisans of carnal dalliance and science,
They search for silence and the shadowings of dread;
Hell well might harness them as horses for the dead,
If it could bend their native proudness in compliance.



In reverie they emulate the noble mood
Of giant sphinxes stretched in depths of solitude
Who seem to slumber in a never-ending dream;



Within their fertile loins a sparkling magic lies;
Finer than any sand are dusts of gold that gleam,
Vague starpoints, in the mystic iris of their eyes.



Meow …

La Mouche (found- art) … what do you see?



by Patrick Bruskiewich

What do you see?

a) the proboscis of a fly

b) a man's '*you know what!*"

c)) A face with eyes, eye brows and a nose

d) none of the above

Creativity From the Past

Manifesto of Lust by Valentine de Saint-Point

A Futurist Manifesto

11th January 1913

A reply to those dishonest journalists who twist phrases to make the Idea seem ridiculous;

to those women who only think what I have dared to say;

to those for whom Lust is still nothing but a sin;

to all those who in Lust can only see Vice, just as in Pride they see only vanity.

Lust, when viewed without moral preconceptions and as an essential part of life's dynamism, is a force.

Lust is not, any more than pride, a mortal sin for the race that is strong. Lust, like pride, is a virtue that urges one on, a powerful source of energy.

Lust is the expression of a being projected beyond itself. It is the painful joy of wounded flesh, the joyous pain of a flowering. And whatever secrets unite these beings, it is a union of flesh. It is the sensory and sensual synthesis that leads to the greatest liberation of spirit. It is the communion of a particle of humanity with all the sensuality of the earth.

Lust is the quest of the flesh for the unknown, just as Celebration is the spirit's quest for the unknown. Lust is the act of creating, it is Creation.

Flesh creates in the way that the spirit creates. In the eyes of the Universe their creation is equal. One is not superior to the other and creation of the spirit depends on that of the flesh.

W e possess body and spirit. To curb one and develop the other shows weakness and is wrong. A strong man must realize his full carnal and spiritual potentiality. The satisfaction of their lust is the conquerors' due. After a battle in which men have died, **it is normal for the victors, proven in war, to turn to rape in the conquered land, so that life may be re-created.**

When they have fought their battles, soldiers seek sensual pleasures, in which their constantly battling energies can be unwound and renewed. The modern hero, the hero in any field, experiences the same desire and the same pleasure. The artist, that great universal medium, has the same need. And the exaltation of the initiates of those religions still sufficiently new to contain a tempting element of the unknown, is no more than sensuality diverted spiritually towards a sacred female image.

Art and war are the great manifestations of sensuality; lust is their flower. A people exclusively spiritual or a people exclusively carnal would be condemned to the same decadence – sterility.

Lust excites energy and releases strength. Pitilessly it drove primitive man to victory, for the pride of bearing back a woman the spoils of the defeated. Today it drives the great men of business who run the banks, the press and international trade to increase their wealth by creating centers, harnessing energies and exalting the crowds, to worship and glorify with it the object of their lust. These men, tired but strong, find time for lust, the principal motive force of their action and of the reactions caused by their actions affecting multitudes and worlds.

Even among the new peoples where sensuality has not yet been released or acknowledged, and who are neither primitive brutes nor the sophisticated representatives of the old civilizations, woman is equally the great galvanizing principle to which all is offered. The secret cult that man has for her is only the unconscious drive of a lust as yet barely woken. Amongst these peoples as amongst the peoples of the north, but for different reasons, lust is almost exclusively concerned with procreation. But lust, under whatever aspects it shows itself, whether they are considered normal or abnormal, is always the supreme spur.

The animal life, the life of energy, the life of the spirit, sometimes demand a respite. And effort for effort's sake calls inevitably for effort for pleasure's

sake. These efforts are not mutually harmful but complementary, and realize fully the total being.

For heroes, for those who create with the spirit, for dominators of all fields, lust is the magnificent exaltation of their strength. For every being it is a motive to surpass oneself with the simple aim of self-selection, of being noticed, chosen, picked out.

Christian morality alone, following on from pagan morality, was fatally drawn to consider lust as a weakness. Out of the healthy joy which is the flowering of the flesh in all its power it has made something shameful and to be hidden, a vice to be denied. It has covered it with hypocrisy, and this has made a sin of it.

We must stop despising Desire, this attraction at once delicate and brutal between two bodies, of whatever sex, two bodies that want each other, striving for unity. We must stop despising Desire, disguising it in the pitiful clothes of old and sterile sentimentality.

It is not lust that disunites, dissolves and annihilates. It is rather the mesmerizing complications of sentimentality, artificial jealousies, words that inebriate and deceive, the rhetoric of parting and eternal fidelities, literary nostalgia – all the histrionics of love.

We must get rid of all the ill-omened debris of romanticism, counting daisy petals, moonlight duets, heavy endearments, false hypocritical

modesty. When beings are drawn together by a physical attraction, let them – instead of talking only of the fragility of their hearts – dare to express their desires, the inclinations of their bodies, and to anticipate the possibilities of joy and disappointment in their future carnal union.

Physical modesty, which varies according to time and place, has only the ephemeral value of a social virtue.

We must face up to lust in full conciousness. We must make of it what a sophisticated and intelligent being makes of himself and of his life; **we must make lust into a work of art.** To allege unwariness or bewilderment in order to explain an act of love is hypocrisy, weakness and stupidity.

We should desire a body consciously, like any other thing.

Love at first sight, passion or failure to think, must not prompt us to be constantly giving ourselves, nor to take beings, as we are usually inclined to do so due to our inability to see into the future. We must choose intelligently. Directed by our intuition and will, we should compare the feelings and desires of the two partners and avoid uniting and satisfying any that are unable to complement and exalt each other.

Equally consciously and with the same guiding will, the joys of this coupling should lead to the climax, should develop its full potential, and should permit to flower all the seeds sown by the merging of two bodies.

Lust should be made into a work of art, formed like every work of art, both instinctively and consciously.

We must strip lust of all the sentimental veils that disfigure it. These veils were thrown over it out of mere cowardice, because smug sentimentality is so satisfying. Sentimentality is comfortable and therefore demeaning.

In one who is young and healthy, when lust clashes with sentimentality, lust is victorious. Sentiment is a creature of fashion, lust is eternal. Lust triumphs, because it is the joyous exaltation that drives one beyond oneself, the delight in posession and domination, the perpetual victory from which the perpetual battle is born anew, the headiest and surest intoxication of conquest. And as this certain conquest is temporary, it must be constantly won anew.

Lust is a force, in that it refines the spirit by bringing to white heat the excitement of the flesh. The spirit burns bright and clear from a healthy, strong flesh, purified in the embrace. Only the weak and sick sink into the mire and are diminished. And lust is a force in that it kills the weak and exalts the strong, aiding natural selection.

Lust is a force, finally, in that it never leads to the insipidity of the definite and the secure, doled out by soothing sentimentality. Lust is the eternal battle, never finally won. After the fleeting triumph, even during the

ephemeral triumph itself, reawakening dissatisfaction spurs a human being, driven by an orgiastic will, to expand and surpass himself.

Lust is for the body what an ideal is for the spirit – the magnificent Chimaera, that one ever clutches at but never captures, and which the young and the avid, intoxicated with the vision, pursue without rest.

Lust is a force.

Constance … La Femme Nue dans L'Origine du monde



Opera dancer Constance Queniaux was a sexually precocious courtesan living from gifts given her by rich men - but preferring the company of women - and ended her life as a very honourable patroness helping orphans.

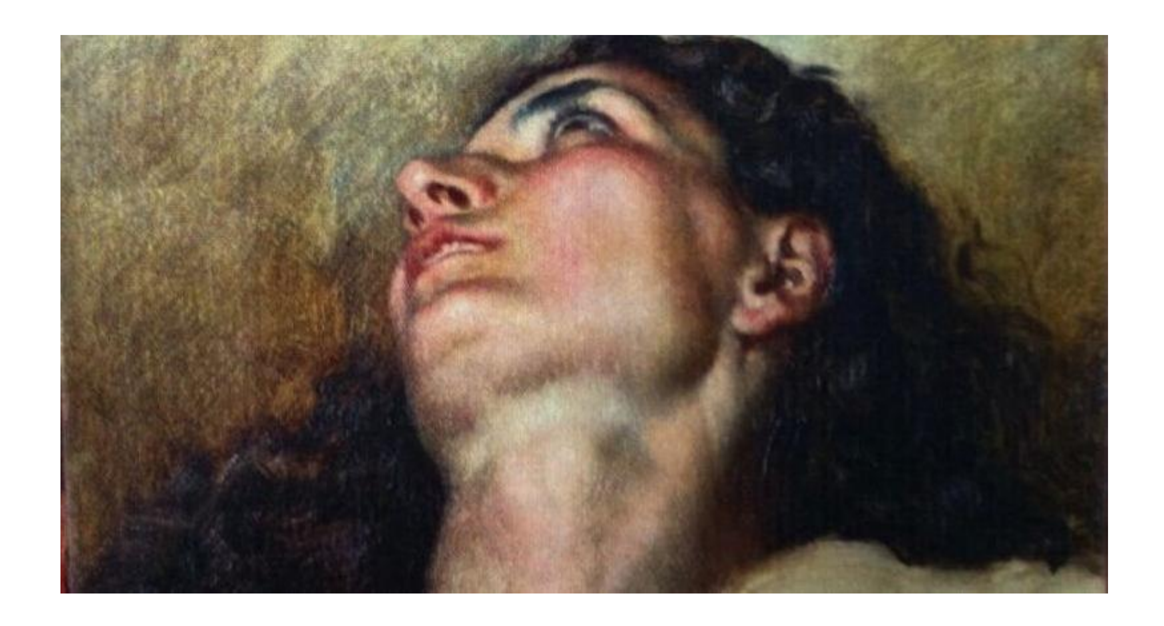
Mademoiselle Constance Queniaux was 34 in 1866 when the French master Gustave Courbet painted her in *L'Origine du Monde*, a realistic close up of a woman's naked vagina, legs spread and face hidden by a rumpled sheet.

Queniaux was a mistress of the Ottoman diplomat Halil Sherif Pasha - aka Khalil Bey - when the picture was painted in the summer of 1866. And it

was he who commissioned the painting from Courbet for his personal collection of erotica.

It was only in the past few years that the mystery surrounding the model for Corbet's titillating painting has been solved. It seems that Corbet's painting was once much larger in size and had been cut-down to feature *sa sexe* of the model and not her *visage*.

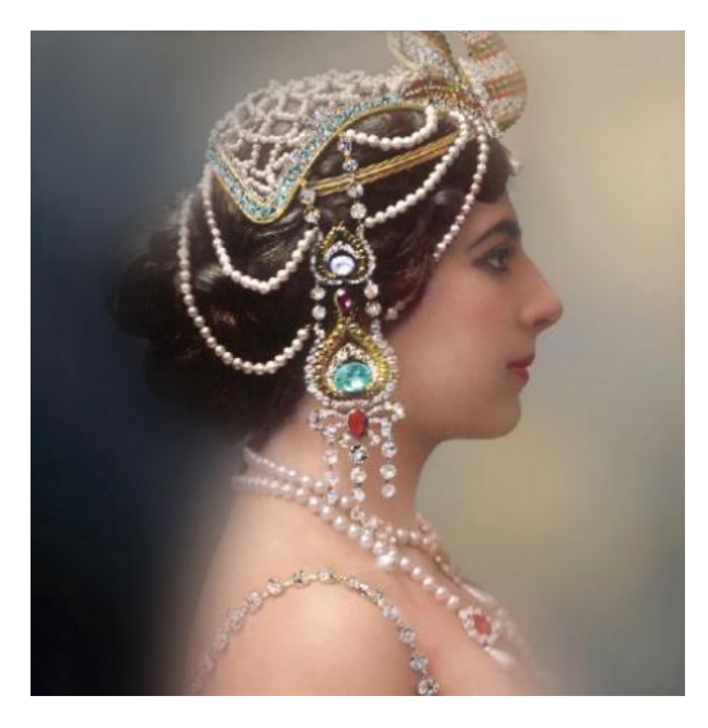
Art historians now believe this is the face in Corbet's painting.



It is the face of the courtesan Mademoiselle Constance Queniaux. You can see that just as her second set of lips are blushing, so is her face … One must wonder how long Corbet kept la Mademoiselle sitting for *sa portrait intime*?

La Femme Fatale Mata Hari en couleur

Over the course of the past century it has become evident that women ... *Les Femmes Fatales* …tend to be the best agents for human intelligence gathering, playing on their charms in a measured and calculated fashion.



One of the great *Femme Fatale* of 20th century espionage is Mata Hari, née Margareta Gertruda Zelle (1876-1917).

There have been many books written about her and a few films produced, included a classic starring Marlene Dietrich and another in the 1980's that was somewhat erotic …

Even today, a century after her execution in 1917, historians differ as to her guilt or innocence. My study of her case, tells me that she was guilty as charged, but that Mata Hari should not have perhaps been executed for her espionage.

La Femme Fatale Mata Hari en couleur

Au cours du siècle dernier, il est devenu évident que les femmes… Les Femmes Fatales … ont tendance à être les meilleurs agents de collecte d'intelligence humaine, jouant de leurs charmes de manière mesurée et calculée.

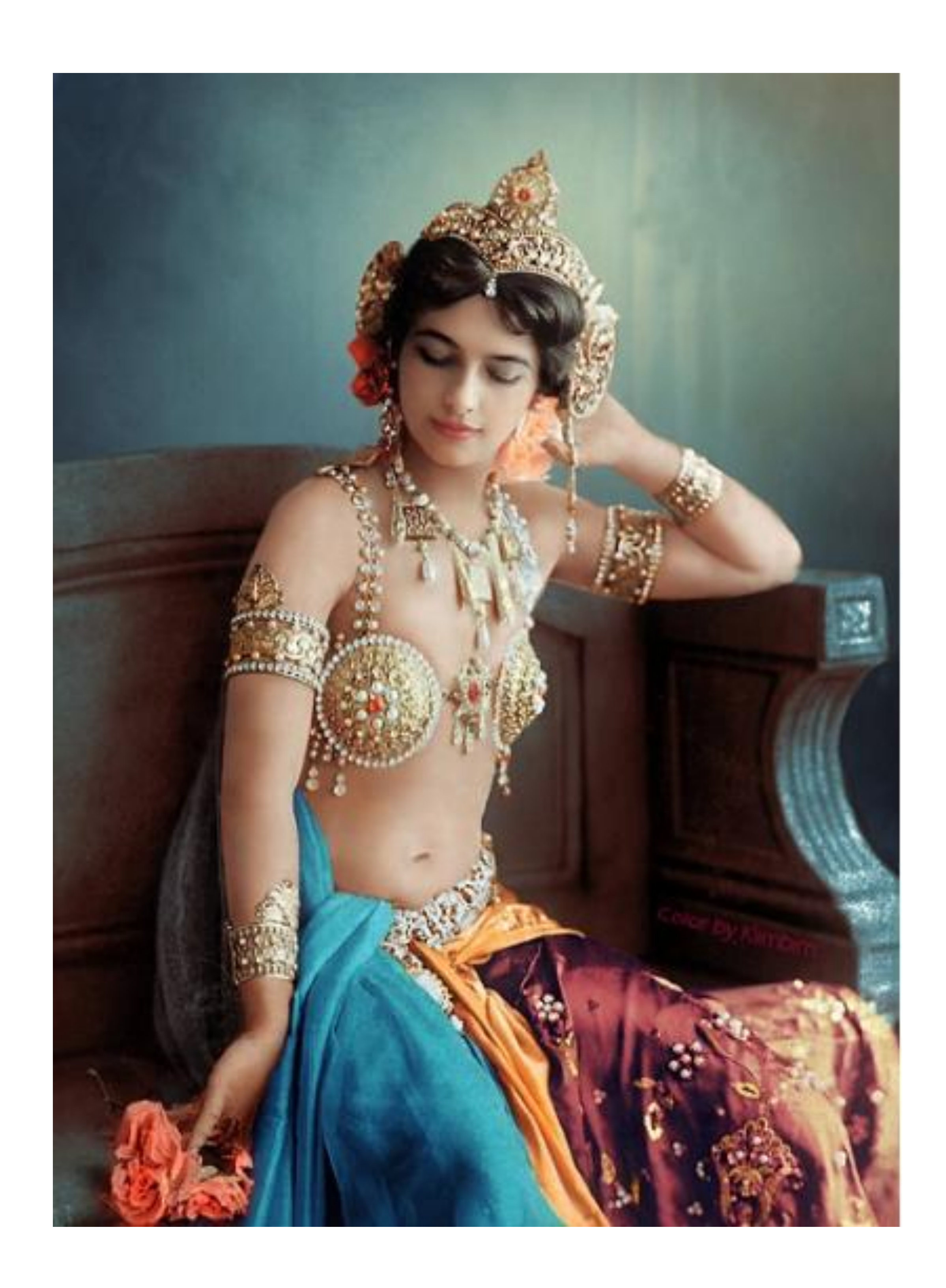
L'une des grandes femmes fatales de l'espionnage du XXe siècle est Mata Hari, née Margareta Gertruda Zelle (1876-1917).



Il y a beaucoup de livres écrits sur elle et quelques films produits, dont un classique avec Marlene Dietrich et un autre dans les années 1980 qui était quelque peu érotique…

Encore aujourd'hui, un siècle après son exécution en 1917, les historiens divergent quant à sa culpabilité ou son innocence. Mon étude de son cas, me dit qu'elle était coupable, mais que Mata Hari n'aurait peut-être pas dû être exécutée pour son espionnage.











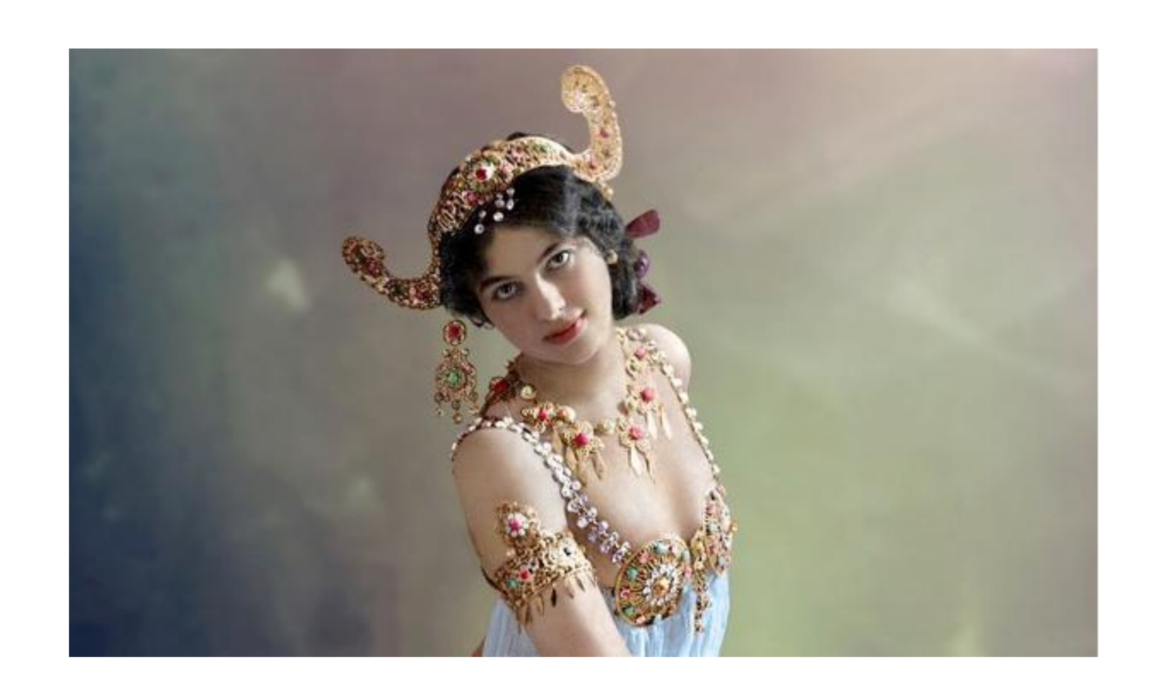
















L'espionne Mata-Hari a été fusillée hier matin à Vincennes

C'est hier matin qu'a été passée par les armes la danseuse Mata-Hari — ou plutôt l'espionne Marguerite-Gertrude Zelle, qui avait profité de l'accueil qu'on lui faisait dans notre pays pour le trahir pendant plusieurs années. Elle avait été condamnée à mort le 24 juillet dernier par le 3e conseil de guerre de Paris, pour espionnage et intelligences avec l'ennemi.

Avant la guerre, elle était déjà à la solde de l'Allemagne. Fréquentant, à Berlin, les

Mata-Hari Cl. Talbot.

milieux politiques, militaires et policiers, elle était immatriculée sus les registres de l'espionnage boche.

French Newspaper article, October 16, 1917

The Legendary Mata Hari by Winfried Ludecke

[Excerpt from: *Behind the Scenes of Espionage*, Winfried Ludecke, 1929]

Mata Hari, "*the Eye of the Morning*," was the poetic Javanese pseudonym adopted by a famous variety artist, who, according to her papers, was a divorced woman named MacLeod née Margareta Gertruda Zelle. She was born in 1876 in Leeuwarden, in Holland, and became one of the subtlest and cleverest secret agents thrown up by the First World War. This international Courtesan, the mistress of Ministers, officers and artists of all nations; this woman, whose insatiable thirst for luxury and money brought many a man to beggary, was at the same time a dancer, who, with the play of her supple naked body in Indian temple dances, roused to thunderous applause the music-hall public in London, Paris, Berlin and Rome.

This adventuress, who was as much at home in Sydney, New York and Cairo as in her elegant mansion, No. 11 rue Windsor, Neuilly, Paris, paid for by a millionaire marquis; this *demi-mondaine* with the airs of a great lady, who, in Germany, raved over her disappointed love for the Crown Prince, and in France, indicated the Russian Captain Marov as the one man whom, in all her life, she had truly loved; this bewitching sorceress of love and art also entered the dangerous province of espionage, for which, by her beauty, her great intellectual gifts and her daring, she certainly seemed remarkably well qualified. Was it the titillating stimulus of danger she sought, or was it the lust of gold that this career promised so quickly to satisfy, that made her enter upon the path that led to her end to Vincennes?

In the trial that took place in the year 1917 behind closed doors in Paris the story of her life that was unfolded was like some sensational film drama. Some interesting details have been made public by Major Count Massard.

On the day of the declaration of war Mata Hari was in Berlin, where she was appearing in the Wintergarten as an Indian dancing girl. By the German Secret Service, who registered as H.21, she was commissioned to go to Paris, which did not entail any great difficulty for her, seeing that she was a Dutch subject and therefore neutral. She received the handsome sum of thirty thousand marks, and went via Belgium, Holland and England to Paris, on the pretext that she was going to break up her house in Neuilly. From Paris she went, after a time, to the French Front, staying at Vittel for many months disguised as a nurse. It was here that she devoted herself to the severely wounded and blind Russian officer Marov, which she appears to have tended with really touching care, asserting that she loved him passionately. All through this period she was in uninterrupted correspondence with the chief of the German intelligence service in Amsterdam. Her letters were forwarded by the Dutch Embassy in Paris, who were under the delusion that she was corresponding with her daughter in Holland. It was a simple matter for the beautiful hospital nurse to gain the confidence of the French officers, and especially the flying-officers, from whom, in moments of amorous delight, she obtained valuable military information. She was able to give the German Army command most useful details as to the disposition of French spies on the German front, and

betrayed the preparations that were being made for a French counter-offensive in 1916.

The British Secret Service was the first to warn the French authorities against her, and at last they too had their suspicions aroused. When she became aware that she was being observed she quitted the front and returned to Paris. But even here she did not feel safe. What was she to do? She did what most spies are wont to do in such circumstances: she offered her services to the other side. She went to the Second Bureau of the French General Staff and made a statement purporting to give the points on the Moroccan Coast where German submarines were sheltering: the statement was, of course, an invention. At the same time she proposed that she should be sent to the occupied zone in Belgium, to convey instructions to the French agents posted there. The French Secret Service pretended to accept the offer, and handed her a list of all the names of their people employed at the time in Belgium. But this list was really a trap; for, of the names included in the list, only one was genuine; and this exception was that of an agent who, they had good reason to believe, was a double spy. Three weeks later this man was shot by the Germans in Brussels. Only Mata Hari could have given him away, by communicating the list, somehow or other, to the enemy.

She had not left Paris; but as she belonged to the neutrals and there was absolutely no clear proof that suspicion was well founded, they did not care to proceed at once to arrest her. She was allowed to leave France.

Here the account of her movements is somewhat obscure. It is certain that she managed to find her way to Germany, for a personal friend of the Crown Prince ran across her in the street in Cologne, and had a long talk with her. She gave him to understand that she intended to go back, sooner or later, to France and would not be dissuaded, alleging she had a professional engagement to keep. On leaving him she used these curious and telltale words: "Remember me as a woman who has done and suffered much for Germany."

It is also certain that the British authorities were aware of her movements. They managed to secure her person, probably arresting her on board ship, and conveyed her to London, where she was subjected to a very thorough cross-examination by Sir Basil Thomson, the Chief of Scotland Yard. With consummate skill she strove to avoid all the traps that were laid for her, and the interview ended most unexpectedly on her admission that she was indeed a spy, but for France, not for Germany. She was sent off to Spain; with what commission is not stated.

Her arrival there was, of course, known to both sides, and from the moment she set foot on shore in the port of Gijon, a French Secret Service agent attached himself to her, following her wherever she went and taking care never to let her out of his sight. He was, from the start, so successful in his job that, on the very day of her landing, he had a photograph taken and sent to his employers, which showed himself and the all-unsuspecting dancer on the one plate. In Madrid she took up her abode in a well-appointed suite of rooms in a fashionable hotel, and was soon on very intimate terms with a

particularly fascinating German attaché there. Her relations with him developed quickly into a regular liaison. There was no opportunity of bringing her charms to bear directly upon the King, who would certainly have known much of what mattered most at that moment concerning Entente policy, so they endeavoured to bring an association between her and the French Military attaché, who lived in the same hotel. But of him she could make nothing. Having been warned beforehand, he successfully repelled all the advances she made to him, on every conceivable pretext.

The German attaché gave the lady one or two dainty trinkets, but Mata Hari needed money, always money. So, as they could make no further use of her as an agent in Spain, it was decided to send her back to Paris, where in any case, as she had told her friend in Cologne, she wished to go. And it was then that the thing was done that sealed her fate.

The attaché sent an urgent wireless message to the chief of the intelligence service in Amsterdam requesting to have fifteen thousand pesetas paid to H.21, by intermediary of the Dutch Embassy, on her return to Paris. That wireless message was intercepted by the Eiffel Tower; and as the French were by this time informed of Mata Hari's letter and number, it was resolved to arrest her. She was allowed to return to Paris, in order to receive payment due at the Dutch Embassy, and almost immediately after she paid this call the police conveyed her to St. Lazare prison.

The proceedings before the court martial were not without dramatic episodes. Mata Hari made ingenious efforts to defend herself. She admitted

quite frankly the various remittances from Amsterdam and her correspondence with the chief spy in Holland, whose mistress she said she was. But, she protested, it was not a question of spying at all, but simply a love affair. She had certainly been a courtesan, but never a spy. Her advocate, an old gentleman of seventy-five, who appeared to be in love with her, and chivalrously lavished her with flowers and sweetmeats upon her, cited as a witness for the defence a French diplomatist who occupied an exalted post in the Foreign Office. He had been her first lover after her divorce, and with him she had spent three evenings on her return from Madrid. He testified that the subject of their conversation had been about Indian art. A very intimate document from a French Minister of War was read aloud and provoked in the court a significant smile. Apparently Mata Hari had used these connections to give herself the necessary importance in the eyes of her employers.

She was unanimously condemned to death, and heard the sentence with a convulsive sort of a smile and a shrug of her shoulders. On the day before her execution she was dancing in her cell and took a bath. She had asked to be allowed to bathe in milk, but had to be satisfied with water. The execution took place at six o'clock on the morning of October 15th, 1917.

The Dutch Government had vainly tried to intervene at the last moment; and, as vainly, her counsel had tried to obtain a reprieve by appealing to a certain article of the criminal code, affirming that she was pregnant by his agency. Mata Hari would not have anything to do with this line of strategy, and refused to undergo the medical examination.

She wrote a few letters of farewell, and then entered the motor-car that conveyed her, accompanied by a military escort, to Vincennes. As proud as a princess she walked past the file of soldiers, who were standing at the present. She bade farewell to her advocate, who embraced her, and to the Sister of Mercy who had watched over her and tended her in her cell, and then received the last words of consolation from the priest.

A gendarme led her to the stake to pinion her, but she objected. She likewise refused to be blindfolded. The officer in charge of the firing party raised his sword. The drums rolled. The clergyman stepped aside. Mata Hari smiled and threw a kiss to the lawyer and the priest.

Then, short and sharp, came the order “Fire!”. A sergeant-major gave her the coup de grace by firing his revolver into her ear. The doctor certified her death. The body of the beautiful dancer and spy, once so ardently loved and admired, was thrown into a plain whitewood coffin.

Finita la commedia!

I Spied for France by Marthe Richer

[Excerpt from: *I Spied For France*, by Marthe Richer, 1935]

When the Baron turned up he knew instinctively that there was trouble ahead. The moment his eyes met mine his face fell.

“What’s wrong Marthe?” He said, as he sat down. I was no hurry to reply to him. I was thinking very hard. My silence was the calm that heralded the storm. I looked pensive, but my mind was in a regular tumult.

“Marthe, please tell me why you are terribly preoccupied,” purred the Baron. “Feeling ill – or what?”

“I’m fed up with Spain,” I thundered. “I’m sick of living in exile. I want to go back to France.” Von Krohn stared at me in amazement. “You are overwrought, Marthe. You want a change. Have a little patience; I’m sending you to Morocco in a fortnight’s time.”

So he in his turn now was prescribing “patience” as a remedy for my troubles! “I want to go back to France,” I repeated doggedly, bringing down my gloved hand on the table with such force that all the cups rattled.

“You can’t do that Marthe. It would mean death for you, and well you know it.”

“And whose fault is that?” I asked bitterly.

“Wait until the end of the war, Marthe. That can’t be far off. And the minute the war is over you can depend upon me that I shall take steps so that you can return to France.”

With my face set hard and my shoulders hunched and my hands clenched, I glared straight into Von Krohn’s eyes, and, yielding to an irresistible impulse, I shouted: “ I am a Frenchwoman! Do you hear that? Do you know what that means? It means that ever since I first met you I have been working for my own country. I have been spying on you. I have kept an eye on all your movements, and duly reported them back to Paris. Now do you understand what it means to be a Frenchwoman?”

I jumped to my feet, staring rigidly at him at all time. Von Krohn went red, pale, livid and tallow green in turn. A diabolical smile played across his thin lips. He found it hard to realise that I was telling him the truth. Such was his profound self-sufficiency, such was his confidence in his infallible knowledge of mankind, that he refused to accept the fact that he had been fooled by a young Frenchwoman. He tried to delude himself into the belief that my outburst had just been prompted by back temper and female whimsicalness. I read all this in his face, and was goaded to greater frenzy by the man’s abysmal fatuity. Well, now I was going to give him the *coup de grâce*.

“Ich bin Französin!”, I shouted in German. He gasped like a stranded fish, and his face became all puckered with sheer horror. As he heard me speaking for the first time in a language which I had pretended I did not know.

“Ha, you seem to think that I am just playing a stupid joke on you, do you?” I went on. “Just half a minute. Here’s something that will convince you.” Opening my handbag I produced the return half of my ticket from Paris to Hendayne – the ticket I had used on the journey during which I had met the Greek consul.

“Look at it!” I said, holding it under his nose. “Look at the date on it! I did not wait until the war was over to return to France, you fool. You see for yourself clear proof that I have been in Paris quite recently!”

“Impossible, impossible, Marthe!” gasped Von Krohn, still incredulous through sheer fatuity. “Say it isn’t true. I know what happened, somebody gave you the ticket.”

“No! I bought it. I’ve fooled you all along the line.” He put his hand to his throat. His face went purple. I thought that he was going to have a fit. “You!” he gasped, hoarse with rage.

“Yes, I! I! I!” I repeated. “I fooled you completely for nearly two years. Just look at the date on the ticket. In fact, you can ask the Greek consul, and he will tell you the name of the station at which I boarded the train. Get this

into your thick head, Baron Von Krohn, naval attaché in Spain to the All Highest, William II, Emperor of Germany. I came to Spain to serve my country!"

Von Krohn stared at me aghast. His fury had for the moment merged into dumb despair. "I don't believe you. I don't believe you. Even a woman couldn't possibly be guilty of such treachery and such falsehood, Marthe." There was an expression of intense agony in his living eye, while the artificial one stared spectrally at me. Beads of perspiration stood out on his brow. His artificial eye glared glassily while his other eye had the expression of a wild beast at bay.

"I told you that my husband had been killed in Switzerland," I went on. "You believed me. Well, now, read this. Now do you believe me?" I extracted from my handbag the official proof that I was a war widow. He stared at it for a long time, as if he was mesmerized. Then all of a sudden he realised how he had been imposed upon, and, overcome by a fit of uncontrollable frenzy, he stuck me across the mouth with such fury that he broke one of my teeth. I believe firmly that, had we not been in a public place, he would have killed me.

I was too dazed to speak, but as soon as I regained possession of myself I addressed him in a defiant, challenging tone. "You have signed your own death-warrant. I'm going to let Prince Rabitov know all about you tomorrow. He will be able to judge for himself how easy it has been for a young Frenchwoman to tweak the nose of the German naval attaché.'

A satanic sneer overspread the features of the hideous Cyclops. "You won't get the chance to do anything of the kind." He jumped from his seat and fled the restaurant with the precipitancy of a scalded cat. I wondered what his next move would be. I really did not care what he intended to do, as I felt that I had him well on the run now. I was out for his ruin, and I felt confident that I would succeed.

When I reached the hotel, the porter told me that a man had just called for me. To judge by the porter's description of him it was nobody whom I knew even by sight. I was pondering about the mysterious caller as I proceeded to my room. I was barely outside my door when there was a ring at the telephone. Obviously my mysterious visitor returning.

Immediately afterwards my door was thrown open, and a Spaniard dashed in unceremoniously. "Police!" he announced curtly.

"Police? Why, pray?"

"You've got to come along with me, madam."

"What for?"

"You tried to blackmail the German naval attaché." Instead of answering him directly, I picked up the receiver and asked the girl at the switchboard to put me to the German Embassy. As soon as I got in touch with the

Embassy, I insisted on His Excellency, Prince Rabitov, granting an interview at the earliest possible moment. After a long negotiation I was told to call next day. Thereupon the official who had come to arrest me retired with profuse apologies, looking extremely silly.

A junior official in the Embassy met me next day, but I insisted that I should immediately be brought face to face with Prince Rabitov. After a considerable amount of further tedious negotiations, I was brought before Prince Rabitov. The Prince, who was just then preparing to go out, was a dapper, trim little man of about sixty, very well dressed, who was obviously doing his utmost to look twenty years younger than he was.

"You are surprised at my visit, I presume, your Excellency?" I said.

"Yes Madame. You are, if my information is correct, one of Baron von Krohn's agents."

"I was nominally one of his agents, Your Excellency, and I have come to inform you that Baron von Krohn has been consistently fooled by me since I entered his service. I took advantage of the fact that he was infatuated with me to make him spend money on me which he got for secret service work."

Prince Rabitov stared at me for some minutes in dumb amazement. He seemed somewhat appaled at hearing such a disclosure about the naval attaché from the lips of a Frenchwoman.

"But – but, I don't understand," he said, with a bewildered expression. "Is it not a fact that the Baron arranged a visit for you to France by secret passage?"

"Yes, I played upon the idiotic infatuation which the old fool had for me. I told him I was ill, and that I wanted to consult a French woman doctor."

Prince Rabitov seemed dumbfounded. "Tell me, madam," he went on, " is it not a fact that Baron von Krohn sent you on a mission to the Argentine?"

"Oh yes, Your Excellency. I rather enjoyed the trip. I was curious to see that country; that was why I went there."

An expression of extreme uneasiness darkened his face. "Answer me candidly, madam, one question. While you were in the service of the naval attaché, did you come into possession of any vital information concerning us?"

"No, Your Excellency, I was only out for having a good time at his expense. But I had the key to his safe in my possession several times. Oh, by the way, here's the combination for it. You can have it as wellas the love letters which the silly ass wrote me. Keep the lot. Goodbye."

The look which Prince Rabitov gave me at this point made it clear to me that if I did not beat a hasty retreat he would have me thrown into the street. I

knew, however, from the impression my revelations made on him that I had effectively finished von Krohn's political career.

I bowed frigidly to the Ambassador. He responded with an even more frigid bow. As I was leaving the Embassy I saw von Krohn approaching the building. When he saw me he shot me a murderous glance. I really believe that, given the opportunity, he would have assassinated me there and then.

I fled from the street shivering with sheer terror.

Carnation 15 by Janos Matou

[excerpt from *Uncensored Magazine*, V. 13, n.02, 1963]

The Reds had a Profumo Scandal Too … Carnation 15

Soon after he was assigned to the US Embassy Prague, a young American career man dropped into the Ambassador Club for a look at night life in Red Czechoslovakia.

He wasn’t disappointed. The nightclub was modern, attractively furnished and well stocked with imported booze and domestic dolls. Several pretty girls were seated alone at small tables between the bar and the dance floor. Other girls were exchanging small talk with well-dressed men, foreigners from both sides of the iron curtain.

As he ordered a drink at the bar, the American heard a babble of languages, and accents – English, French, German, Russian, Polish and other tongues he could not identify. Then his wandering gaze met the smiling green eyes of a gorgeous redhead.

She was sitting by herself at a small table near the wall. Her full lips were moist and inviting. Her skin tight dress of moss green exposed creamy shoulders and a spectacular view of full, firm breasts.

Almost before he realized what he was doing the American was at her table.

“Hello,” he said, “do you speak English?”

“Yes, a little, “a husky voice replied. “My name is Lydia. Would you care to join me?”

Hours later, and somewhat drunk, the American was in the redhead’s bedroom. Stripped to his shorts he sat at the edge of the bed and babbled about Washington while the girl removed her underclothes and placed them neatly on the chair.

“Now remember,” she said with a throaty laugh, “you mustn’t tell me anything important. I’m an agent of the Secret Police.”

Though the diplomat thought she was kidding, the sexy redhead told him the truth. She was Lydia Lichtenberg-Ungrova, Queen of the kiss-and-tell girls the Czech Secret Service employs to spy on foreigners – and on Communist officials as well.

In her handbag she carried a silver compact with a secret compartment behind the mirror. Thus was the hiding place for her identity card, to be used only in extreme emergencies.

The card, green with two red stripes, bore he photo, the official seal of the Czech Interior Ministry, and the inscription “Ministry of Interior – L77.”

Lydia was agent L77 of the *Statni Bezpecnost* – State Security Police – better known as the STB or "Czech Gestapo." Beside her official identification number, she also had a code name – "*Carnation 15*." *Why fifteen? She was fifteen at the time Lydia was recruited as a sexploitation agent!*.

Lydia Lichtenberg-Ungrova was the Christine Keeler of the Warsaw Pact. Her Iron Curtain orgies with Czech Cabinet, Ministers, Western Diplomats, and Soviet Leaders made London's Profumo Affair look like a Sunday picnic.

Lydia free-wheeling love life exploded a *sexpionage* scandal that rocked the Czech Government, brought roars of rage from the Kremlin, and led to a top level purge in the Czech Cabinet, and STB. At least a dozen high government officials and secret police officials were jailed. Two high-ranking *officials* were quietly executed.

But the Communist Press, who highlighted the Profumo Affair, mentioned not a word of the Prague Scandal. This *story* is still a carefully guarded secret behind the Iron Curtain.

Though Christine Keeler was a call-girl accepting money and presents from her lovers, she was an amateur at espionage. Though she slept with Soviet spy Evgeny Ivanov, and British War Minister John Profumo, almost simultaneously, she apparently did not pry any defense secrets from Profumo for delivery to Ivanov.

The big difference between Christine Keeler and Lydia Ungrova was that luscious Lydia was a pro. She knew what she wanted, how to get it and what to do with it. She not only lured foreigners into her perfumed trap and pumped them dry of information, but she alos outfoxed her own bosses and double-crossed the dreaded STB.

Forced to give her body to the Communist cause Lydia hated the Communist and everything they stood for. So she became a double-agent and peddled information to both sides in the Cold War.

The girl who was the become long-stemmed, night blooming "Carnation 15" was born Oct. 9 1932 in a working class neighborhood of Prague. Her father Anton Lichtenberg, was a construction worker and a minor official of the People's (Communist) Party.



When Soviet troops entered Czechoslovakia in 1945 Lydia's family welcomed them. But the girl noted that the "liberators' looked at her the same hungry way the hated Nazis did.

As she returned from school one afternoon in the fall of 1945 she noticed two Soviet soldiers following her. One was a sturdy square-faced Russian. The other was squat and bowlegged, with Mongol eyes.

When she walked faster, so did they. Then she started to run, but they caught up with her and dragged her into the ruins of a bombed-out building a block from her home. After chocking her and punching her to stop her screams, they tore off her clothes and raped her repeatedly until she lost consciousness.

She staggered home an hour later, battered, bleeding and hysterical. Her father searched for the rapists, without success. Then he reported the incident to the police.

Afraid of the Russians, the police did nothing. When the angry father kept demanding action, he was booted out of the People's Party, and threatened with arrest unless he kept his mouth shut.

From then on, Lydia hated not only the Russians but all Communist officials as well. She made up her mind to flee *to the West* as soon as she could.

In 1948 the sixteen year old beauty and her brother Frank, 18, tried to escape to West Germany. They took a train to Pilsen, then walked to the Bavarian border.

A high barbed wire fence stretched along the German-Czech border as far as they could see. Guard towers were stationed at half-mile intervals. Border guards with machine-guns and vicious dogs patrolled the open spaces between the towers. After dark, spot lights illuminated this Cold War no-man's land.

Lydia and Frank made their dash to freedom a few minutes after midnight at a spot halfway between two guard towers. Waiting until a patrol team passed their hiding place in the woods, they emerged from the trees and *dashed* for the fence.

They were almost to the barbed wire when Lydia stumbled and fell. As Frank stopped to help her sentries in the tower began firing. Fatally wounded, he pitched on his face in the dirt. Lydia was holding her dead brother in her arms when they arrested her.

She was taken to a prison in Pilsen, where the guards used her the same way the Russian soldiers had. Only this time she was too numb with grief and horror to worry about her virtue.

The next day a tall, *crooked* nose STB captain called on her. "Take off your clothes," he ordered.

Believing she was about to be raped again, she obeyed with a shudder of disgust. The captain appraised her naked body with an experienced eye and

ran a cold hand over her flesh. Then he made he walked around the narrow cell. She felt like an animal being judged at a country fair.

Finally the officer seemed satisfied. He was convinced Lydia would be perfect bait for a STB sex trap. She was given her choice of sentences – a long term in a *hard labor* prison camp or a life of luxury as a sexpionage agent.

It did not take her long to decide. After questioning by other STB agents she was sent to Gorgau Castle in Bohemia – a medieval fortress that had been converted to a modern school for spies.

Lydia's class at sexpionage college consisted of about 15 Czech, Polish, Hungarian and East German girls 16 to 23. Most of them already spoke several different languages. Lydia, for instance, knew some German and Russian. She received some short courses on conversational English, French and Italian.

Like fashion models the girls learned how to walk, dress and use cosmetics properly. They were also taught how to operate miniature cameras and tape recorders, and how to spring a man-trap and how to obtain information while making love. There were classes in coding, blackmail, pornographic photography and sexual perversion.

Though Lydia was neither virginal nor a prude, the *seduction* course both shocked and sickened her. Some perversions she had never even heard of

before, let alone indulged in. But the '*old whore*' spelled them out with charts, diagrams and photographs. Only one was ignored – homosexuality. Her turotrs reasoned even she could not seduced a confirmed *homo* …

On graduation she was given a new wardrobe, an STB bankroll and a modern apartment in downtown Prague equipped with the latest electronic eavesdropping devices: microphones, tape recorders and a movie camera was hidden in her bedroom wall.

Her beat was the Prague nightclub circuit – the *East*, *International*, *Ambassadors*, *Areal*, *Barhara* and *Praha*. In all these clubs and hotel bars, she had her pick of lonely foreigners. But most of those she chose were selected in advance by her STB superiors.

Even fellow spies fell for her, not realizing that she too was a secret agent.

From an Israelis agent she learned of a plan to help 500 Czech Jews escape to Israel. The plot was smashed and several Jewish leaders were arrested.

A French diplomat was kicked out of the country after 'Carnation 15' unmasked him as an atom spy who had obtained uranium samples from the mines of northern Bohemia. His Czech confederate was executed and 18 other Czechs got long prison terms.

When the sexual demands of a Soviet Embassy attaché became too much even for Lydia, she decided to get rid of him. She supplied him with a

young girl, then took pictures of their lovemaking. Next time the Russian returned to Moscow on business, she planted the pornographic film in his luggage – where it was sure to be found by the *KGB – the Soviet Secret Police*. The romantic Russian never returned to Prague.

Other orgy scenes filmed by Lydia were used to blackmail Western Diplomats and businessmen to spy for the *Czechs and Soviets* – and to incriminate Czech officials and her own STB bosses. Everything she saw, heard and did was written in her diaries. She also collected voluminous tape recordings from which she gleamed material for her weekly reports to STB headquarters.

"The night of March 5th I slept with …… of the British Embassy" one typical report began. "He made live to me three times in the normal fashion." Under the influence of vodka he told me about plans for British naval maneuvers in the Mediterranean. The following details were disclosed. …"

She slept with Americans (North and South), Germans (East and West), Englishmen, Frenchmen, Italians, Turks, Greeks, Arabs, Scandinavians, Cubans, Africans and Asians. Along Prague's Diplomatic Row, Lydia's bedroom was known as "United Nations Assembly Hall."

Ambassadors and security agents of every foreign embassy in the Czech capital knew '*Carnation 15*' was a sexpionage agent. But there were always

some newly arrived diplomats who did not know – and older hands who knew, but did not care.

"I am sleeping with too many men," Lydia wrote in one of her diaries. "including Captain Rappant (her STB superior), an Iraqi General –wealthy *huso*, what a swine! – and a Czech Army major who is a dirty old *bastard*.

"He likes to play the '*Big Shot*' who knows everything," she added concerning the major, "so I pick up useful information from him. We go to bed at my place every Tuesday from 10 a.m. till lunchtime."

On Tuesday morning the major phoned her and asked Lydia to come to his place because he had a sprained shoulder and couldn't go out. On his desk she saw a pile of Army documents stamped "Top Secret." So she plied the major with brandy and sex until he fell asleep. Then she photographed the papers with the miniature camera she always carried in her purse.

She later sold the film to a Western Intelligence agent.

Though the STB has strict rules barring fraternization between male and female agents, '*Carnation 15*' was plucked by most of her immediate superiors. One of these was Major Karel Kassalek, to whose office Lydia was for a time assigned.

Kassalek's duties include the entertainment of foreign trade delegations, especially those from Asia. He maintained what Lydia described as "a free

brothel for Communist Big Shots." When Kassalek put her in this brothel to entertain North Koreans, Lydia decided to frame the STB social director.

She made photographs of some 3500 cards in his secret files, sold the information to Western Intelligence, then told the STB commander General Burda, she suspected Kassalek was a double-agent. Burda quickly confirmed there was a security leak in Kassalek's office. Unable to prove Kassalek was a double agent, the general ordered him to sneak into West Germany as a refugee and contact other *Czechniks* there.

Kassalek notified the frontier guards when and where he would cross the border into West Germany. When he showed up on schedule their turned their spotlights and machineguns on him.

Lydia made this brief notation in her diary; 'Exit Kassalek.'

In 1953 she became pregnant by a Venezuelan diplomat. At least he accepted the responsibility. Though he already had a wife and children in South America, he offered to take her to Caracas. But Czech authorities refused to grant her an exit permit.

She was sent to the Slovakian town of Banska Bystrica uner STB guard and remained there until the Venezuelan was recalled to Caracas, and her daughter *Nadya* was born (*Nadya means Hope* …).

On her return to Prague she was assigned to a new "*control office,*" Captain Frantisek Rappant commander of the STB station on Zhorovska street. A sadistic sex pervert, Rappant delighted in beating prisoners until they were half-dead. He had a special torture chamber in his police station, with padded walls to muffle the screams.

But Lydia sensed this inhuman brute was a sexual weakling. After their first bedroom bout, he was completely dominated by her.

Rappant was the official procurer for several high placed Communists, including a STB Colonel and two Cabinet Ministers who were notorious sexual degenerates. He asked Lydia to help him recruit teenage girls and boys for wild orgies held in luxurious apartments maintained by the STB.

Lydia took films of these revels and recorded every sordid detail in her diaries.

Hardened as she was to degeneracy and double-dealings, the orgies made her so disgusted with life she turned to drugs to help her forget what she had becomes … a *Madame* … An Egyptian diplomat supplied her with hashish. When Rappant heard what was happening, he arrested her and put her into Pankrae Prison Hospital for withdrawal treatment. The Egyptian was deported.

Ordinarily this would have been the end of Lydia's career. But she had too much on Rappant. He kept her arrest quiet and reinstated her into her old job after she was released from Hospital.

Then he suggested she start to blackmail her lovers for cash as well as information. When she refused he threatened to kidnap her daughter *Nadya*. She, in turn, threatened to expose hi debaucheries and shakedowns.

Rappant backed down. Lydia pretended to forget their quarrel, but reported the incident to her Western contacts. Every card and document in Rappant's possession was photographed and the film sent to the West.

She continued working as a double-agent for several years. If Rappant suspected what she was doing, he was afraid to report her. He finally decided to get rid of her '*unofficially*.'

When Lydia returned home late one night in 1961, a young gunman ambushed her in the hallway and fired three shots at her. One bullet grazed her thigh, but she was not hurt. Police heard the shots and captured the gunman two blocks away. He said he was trying to rob her, but Lydia recognized him as one of Rappant's informers.

Next day she told Rappant she would quit the STB. If he would arrange her discharge and agree to leave her alone, she would not mention his attempt to murder her. If not …

She tossed a bulky envelop on his desk. Rappant opened it and took out a pile of photographs. His swarthy face turned completely white. Within 48 hours she had her discharge …

Lydia went to work as a cashier in the Koruna Snack Bar on Wenceslaus Square in downtown Prague. She found a new boyfriend Tonda Jemelik. He was the best jazz piano player in Prague, but could not work because the government frowned on Jazz. Lydia introduced him to friends in the Western embassies and he was hired to play the piano for parties there.

She tried unsuccessfully to get permission to emigrate to the West. Afraid she would try to defect or turn double-agent (what she already was) the STB made life hell for her and her jazz performing boyfriend. For added insurance, the STB also took away her daughter as a hostage.

In January 1962, 'Carnation 15' prepared her last espionage adventure. She turned over all her diaries, recordings and photographs to Western Intelligence agents. She retained copies of incriminating evidence against Rappant and his orgy pals and placed this photographic evidence in an envelope addressed to General Burda, STB commandant.

On the night of January 26th 1962 she mailed the envelope.

At 3 o'clock the following morning Lydia and her boyfriend returned to her apartment at 14 Ondrickova Street. They had been at a jazz party and had been heavily drinking.

They undressed and went to bed. Shortly before dawn Lydia got up in the dark and turned on all four gas jets on her kitchen stove. Then she sat down at the kitchen table and lit a cigarette. She could hear her boyfriend fast asleep in the other room snoring, and the sound of a neighbor getting ready to leave for work.

She had time for four cigarettes before the gas killed both her and her last lover. Too late, Rappant heard of her suicide. He was arrested in her burnt out apartment searching frantically for her diaries.

Within the next two weeks at least 30 STB agents and government official were jailed. Soviet KGB officials rushed to Prague to reorganize the Czech security service. Soviet dictator Nikita Khrushchev reshuffled the Czech regime.

This sexpionage scandal was kept from the Czech public, but ‘Carnation 15’ had accomplished her final mission. She had gotten what she wanted – revenge!

A Graphic Novella

My First Crush by Patrick Bruskiewich

{Submitted to the 15th annual Manga Contest, Tokyo, Japan}



When I was five years old my neighbor was a girl my age and fun to play with. We shared an interest in picture books. I remember her pleasant smile and her giggle, and her blue eyes and her curly red hair. Her name was Penelope … but we called her Penny.

We could not wait to enter first grade. But sadly she would not make it.

One day she went away to the hospital. When she came home I knew something was wrong. But neither she nor her parents would say what. My once energetic and happy friend now had neither energy nor happiness.

One day I snuck over to see her. She was asleep. I thought my prized teddy bear would bring her good luck and tucked it into bed beside her. She took it with her to the hospital. She never came back home.

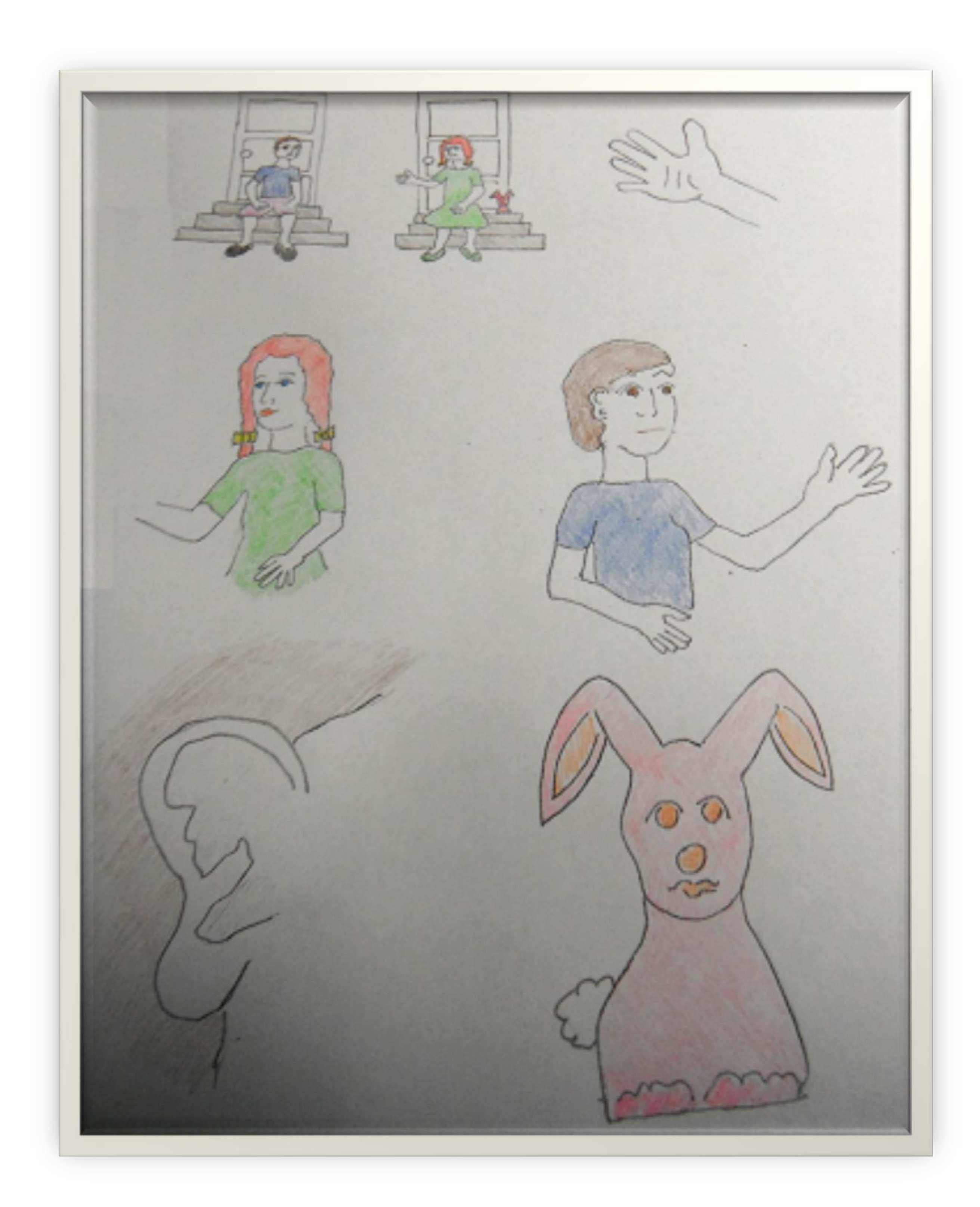
The time between her diagnosis and her demise was eight months. It was a childhood leukemia that took her.

Her parents, on their return from the hospital were overcome with grief. They asked me if I wanted my teddy bear back.

I said no. I wanted her to have it, to play with it in heaven.

She was buried with my teddy bear.



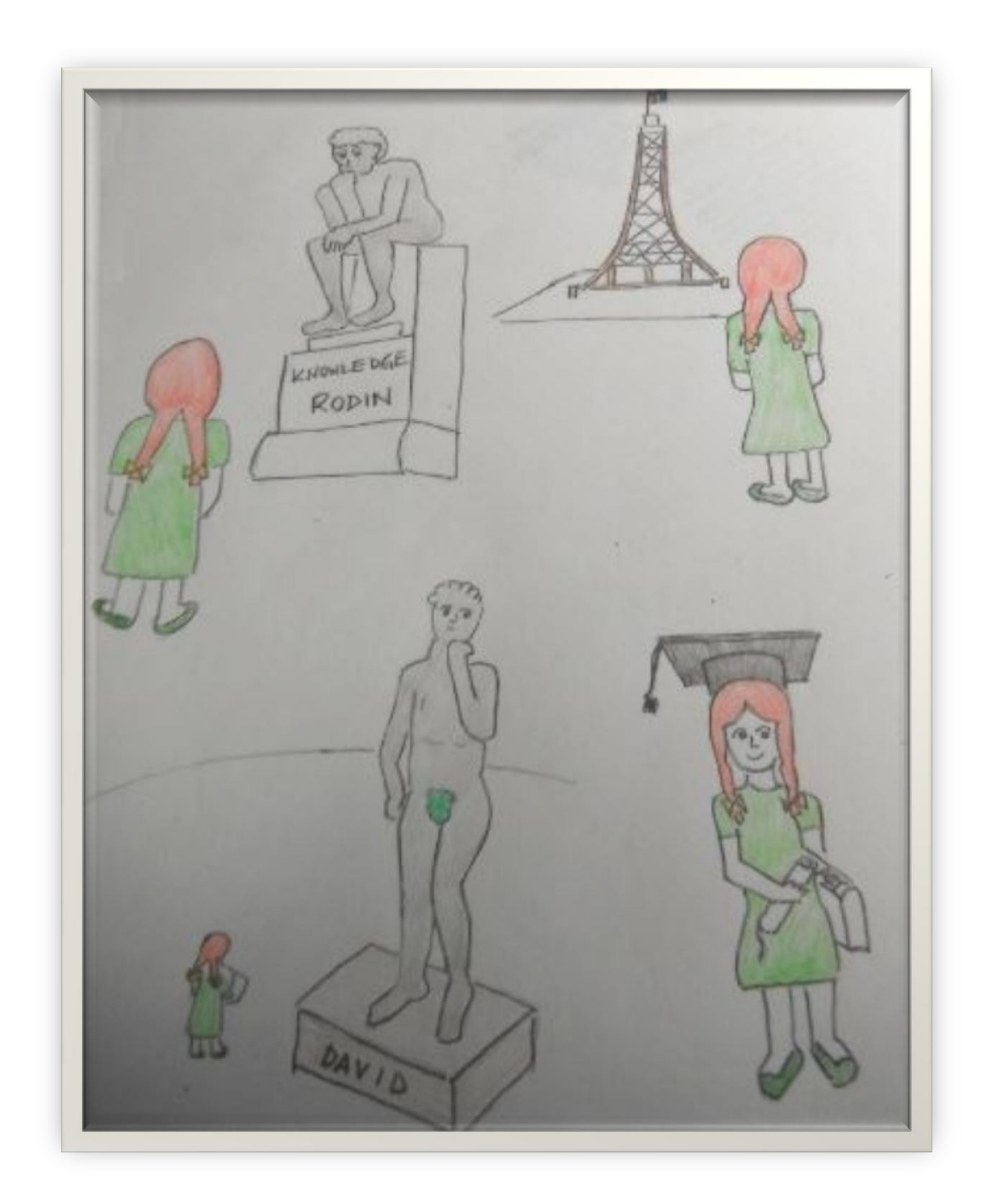





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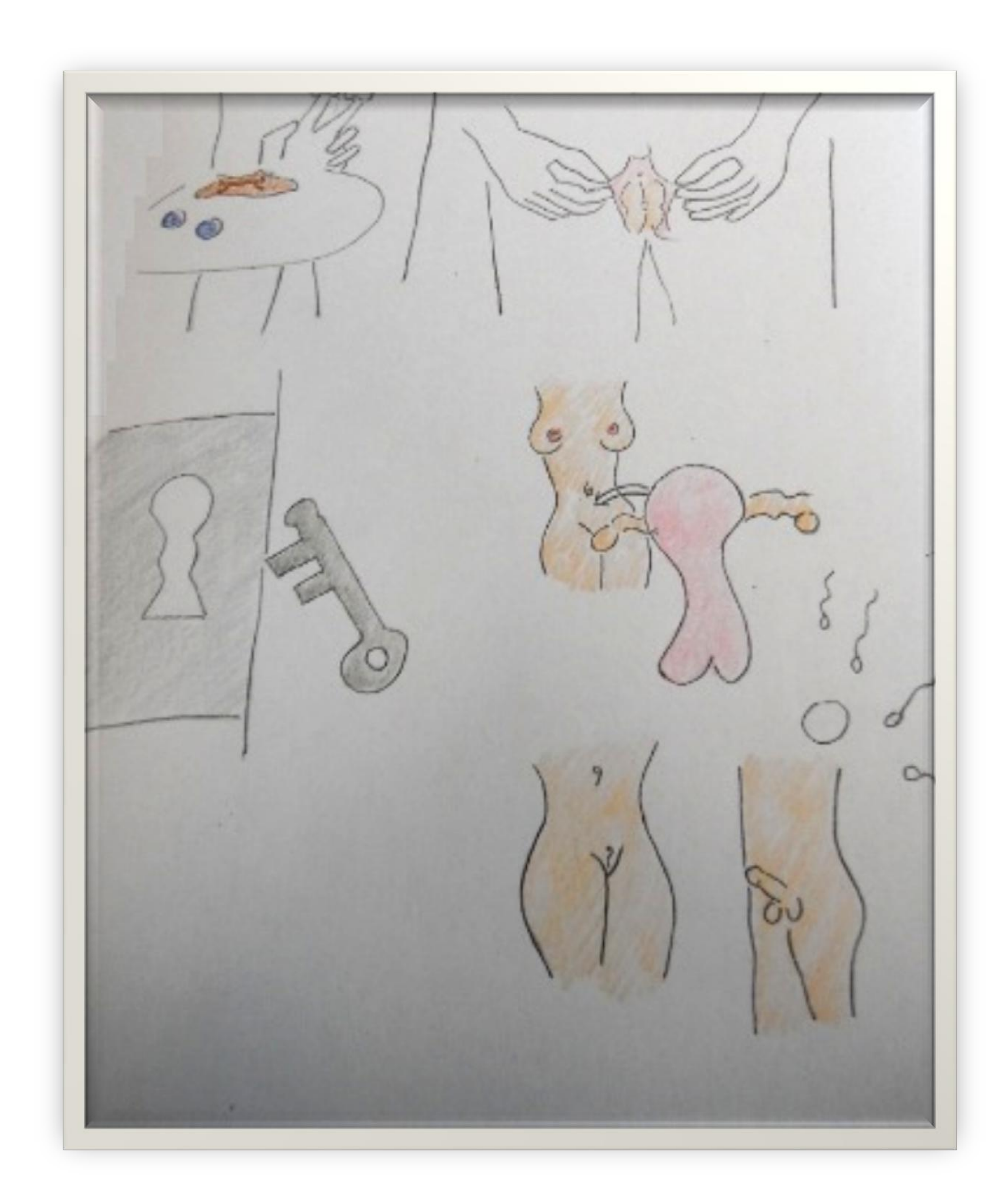


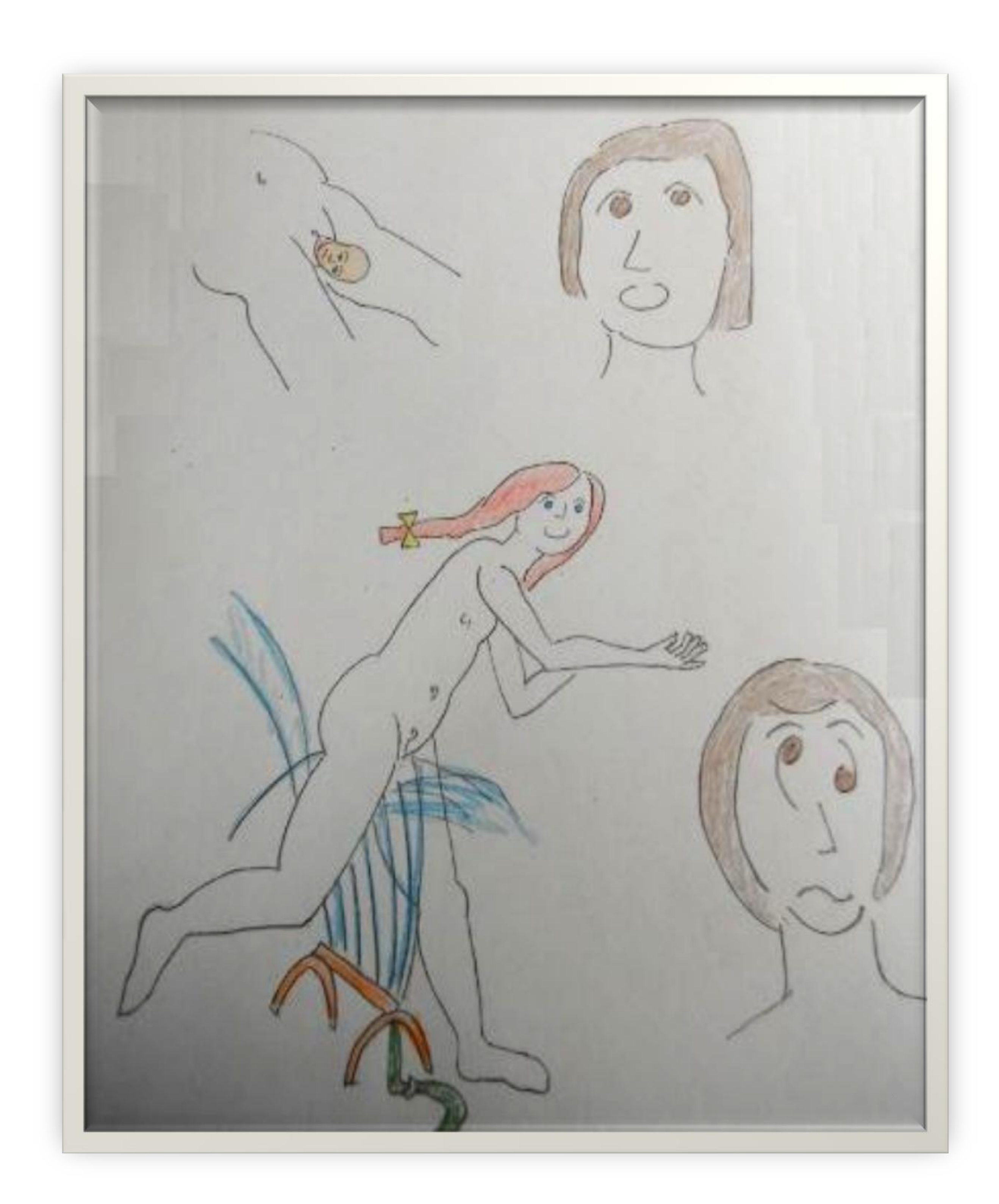










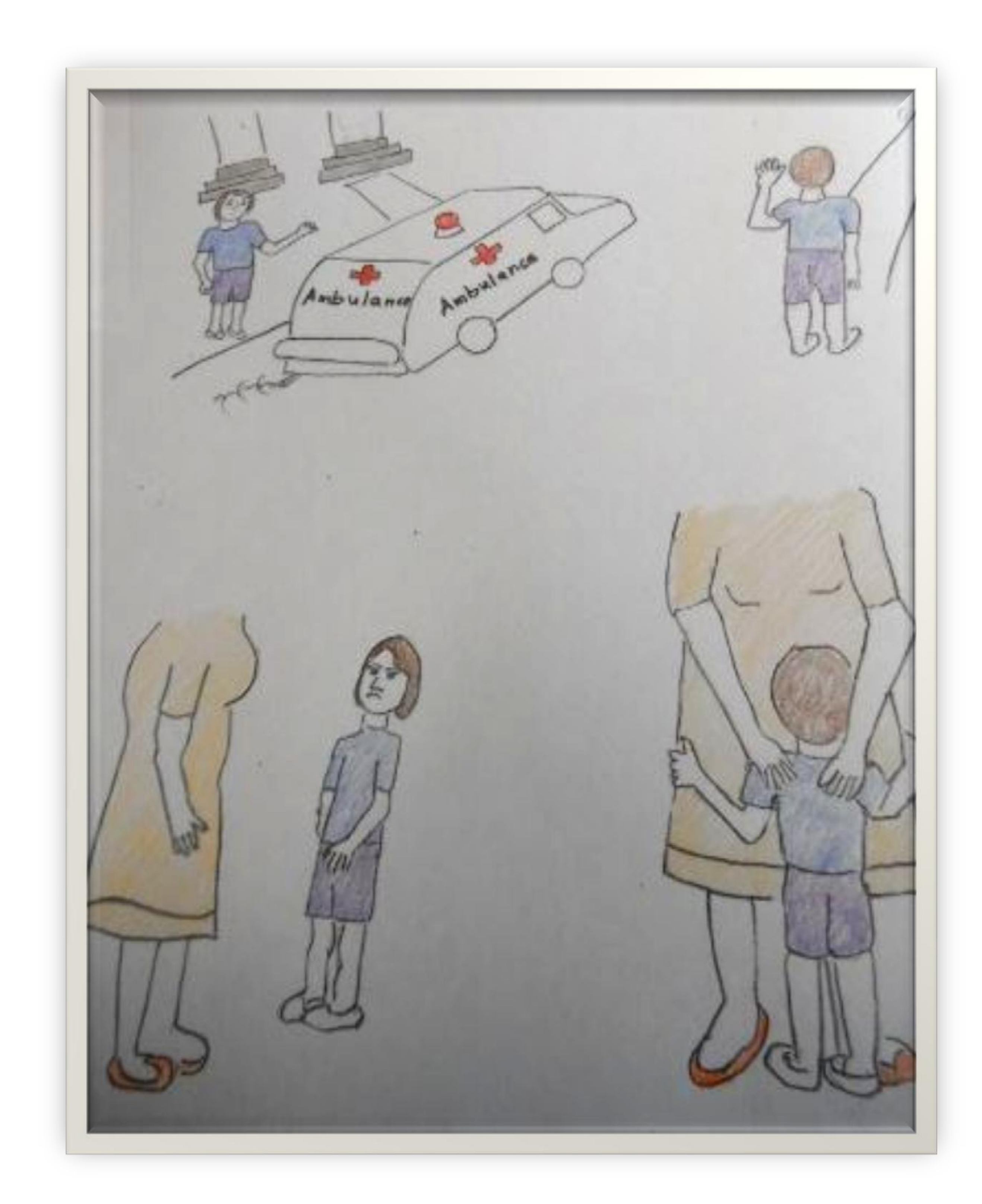





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HOSPITAL
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Ambulance
Ambulance



In Memory of



Penelope

(1961-1966)

Medical science developed a treatment

for childhood leukemia in 1968.

A Script

The Many Loves of Mata Hari by Patrick Bruskiewich

Story Line:

The night before her execution, Mata Hari recounts her many loves to a poor orphaned peasant girl who has been delegated by the nuns to help her prepare for the dawn.

She bequeaths her worldly possessions to the poor girl, which encourages her to set out into the world and live her life the way she would like to live it. The young woman is smuggled out of the orphanage in her trunk the morning of Mata Hari's execution.

Characters:

Mata Hari, Condemned to death and awaiting execution
Mata Hari's Lawyer, George
Mata Hari's Chef, Philip
A poor orphaned peasant girl, Marie-Eve
Several French Guards
Several French Nuns
A French Colonel
A French Priest

ARRIVAL PRISON CELL INT NIGHT

The door opens and an old nun with an old fashion habit shuffles in and places a three legged stool in the middle of the bare room.

She leaves for a moment and returns with a crucifix, which she places on the table and a bed roll which she unrolls on the steel cot next to the stool.

The nun begins to leave and as she gets to the door Mata Hari enters followed by an old guard with his rifle drawn. Mata Hari is wearing a plain gray dress. The old guard sports an eye patch.

Mata Hari stops and the guard pushes her forward with his rifle.

OLD GUARD

> Here you are Prisoner. You are to be held in this cell until dawn tomorrow.

The nun stops and hastily does the sign of the cross twice then shuffles out of the cell.

After the nun leaves a young guard appears. The young guard is carrying some old gray threadbare blankets, which he tries to hand to Mata Hari.

She does not take the blankets but motions for him to place them on the bed. He looks at here for a moment before shuffling over to the bed and dropping the blankets unceremoniously on it.

Then he shuffles back to the door and begins to swing it shut. Just before he closes the door Mata Hari speaks forcing him to stop what he is doing. It is obvious he does not want to talk to her.

MATA HARI

Why did she do that?

OLD GUARD

She thinks you are evil … Prisoner.

MATA HARI

Please, tell her not to do that!

OLD GUARD

I will tell her nothing. You can try … but I doubt she will listen to you.

MATA HARI

I can understand why you may hate me. All the French Army seems to hate me, but why her.

OLD GUARD

She's old fashion and like her clothes … she has certain bad habits.

MATA HARI

She is a sister of God! Shame on you making fun of her …

OLD GUARD

Why should you care?

MATA HARI

I care … I pray all the time.

OLD GUARD

Are you prayers ever answered?

MATA HARI

Sometimes.

OLD GUARD

Well …Prisoner … I doubt they will be this time.

MATA HARI

I have not given up hope.

He salutes her mockingly.

OLD GUARD

At dawn … say hello to the devil for me.

The Guard exits the room bolting the door behind him.

Mata Hari is alone and looks around the room.

MATA HARI

How far have I fallen …

She sits at the stool. It wobbles. She stand up and walks over to the cot, unrolls the mattress, sets the blankets and lays down.

She tries to make herself comfortable but cannot. She tosses back and forth until she turns to face the wall and begins to cry.

MATA HARI

Is there not any hope for me?

Outside there is the sound of the changing of the guard. She gets up and walks over to the barred window. It is too high for her to see and so she takes the three legged stool and standing on her toes looks out.

MATA HARI

It must be mid-night …

The door unbolts and the younger guard re-enters. Behind him is the old nun who is carrying a plate with some food and a cup of tea. You can see the steam rising from the tea. She places them on the floor next to the door.

MATA HARI

Thank you for your kindness sister.

The nun ignores Mata Hari.

MATA HARI

Sister … am I to suffer here alone?

The nun sneers at her, she crosses herself once and leaves the room. The door is swung close and is bolted. Mata Hari races to the door and pleads through the bars.

MATA HARI

Sister …sister for the love of God, please come and sit with me?

Mata Hari lingers at the door in despair for a moment before going over to the food and tea. She picks at the food but leaves it on the plate.

She takes up the tea and walks over to the cot and sits. She holds the tea cup in her hands for a few seconds to warm herself. She takes a sip from the tea and then places the cup next to her face and shrugs her shoulders.

MATA HARI

I am doomed.

LAWYER'S FIRST VISIT INT NIGHT

The door is unbolted and the old guard opens it and steps in. This time his rifle is slung over his shoulder.

OLD GUARD

You have a visitor Prisoner ….

Mata Hari sits up on the bed, then slowly stands and places her hands on her hips.

MATA HARI

At this hour … you should knock … I am a lady and I deserve some privacy.

OLD GUARD

A woman perhaps … but not a lady.

MATA HARI

What would you know of the difference?

OLD GUARD

A wholesome life has taught me the difference.

Mata Hari takes a step forward and grabs her dress and slowly draws it to the top of her leather boots. The lace of her slip is just barely visible. The guard takes special interest.

OLD GUARD

Next time I shall knock … but do not ask me for anything more.

The guard steps out of the entrance and her lawyer enters.

The lawyer solemnly removes his hat and bows with his hand over his heart. He leans his walking stick against the door frame.

LAWYER

Bonsoir Madame.

MATA HARI

You mean bonjour George … it is past midnight …Any news?

LAWYER

Yes ….

She gets excited, clasps her hands together as in prayer, stands and approaches him.

MATA HARI

A reprieve!

He waves with his hand and shakes his head.

LAWYER

… bad news I am afraid.

He steps forward and places his arms around her. The lawyer hugs her … she is lifeless while he does this.

They separate and she straightens her dress. She turns her back to him.

LAWYER

It is so late …. There is not much more I can do …

MATA HARI

Maybe in the morning?

LAWYER

… They are to execute the sentence at dawn…

MATA HARI

Execute the sentence! You mean shoot me George. They will shoot me at Dawn! That doesn't leave us much time does it?

LAWYER

I will not give up trying to save you. When I leave I will look for a telephone. I will work through the night

MATA HARI

The minutes pass by quickly George … What time is it.

The lawyer hunts for a pocket watch in the pocket of the vest. It is a fancy gold watch on a long gold chain. He takes it out of his pocket.

LAWYER

It is twenty minutes past the hour.

The lawyer puts the watch to his ear to hear if it is running.

MATA HARI

Which hour?

LAWYER

Minuit … midnight my dear.

MATA HARI

Just as I thought … past midnight. My life is counting down quickly.

LAWYER

You should try to get some rest …

MATA HARI

Do you really think I will be able to sleep tonight?

The lawyer fixates on his watch as he stops to wind it.

LAWYER

Perhaps I should only visit for a short time …

MATA HARI

I have always admired your watch. It is very beautiful.

LAWYER

It is isn't it! My father gave this pocket watch to me as a gift the day I was called to the Bar at the Sorbonne. It was made in Geneva in 1870 and once belonged to my grandfather.

MATA HARI

I have noticed that you like to look at it as you think.

LAWYER

You are very observant Margaretha. This is one of the traits I most admire about you. When I look at my watch I think back to the advice that my father gave me. My father was a supreme court judge you know.

MATA HARI

In the past few weeks I have seen you do a great deal of thinking.

LAWYER

Yes I have had to think a great deal. Margaretha you seem to understand the human condition better than most women.

MATA HARI

Perhaps it is all that I have been through in my life. God only knows that woman lack the understanding of some things like men do.

LAWYER

Things like law?

MATA HARI

Things like war and killing … women are made for love not war. We are soft like Venus not hard like Mars.

LAWYER

Do you know why I was asked to take your case?

MATA HARI

Was it because we were friends and you believe in my innocence?

LAWYER

As a friend I felt a certain responsibility to you but … but you know Mata Hari … no other lawyer in France wanted to argue your defence.

The Lawyer takes another look at his pocket watch. She is silent. She fights back tears. He looks up and hands her his handkerchief which she waves away.

MATA HARI

I will smudg it … with my tears.

He hands it to her a second time, insistently. She accepts it. She smells the perfume in the handkerchief and starts to wave it around the room.

MATA HARI

You have always been a perfect gentleman towards me.

He smiles and bows.

LAWYER

Oui Madame. And why not be kind to a lady. Perhaps I should only visit for a short time … it is getting quite late.

MATA HARI

George … it is getting quite early. You are still thinking of yesterday … with what awaits me … I can only think of today.

LAWYER

I need to go …

The lawyer walks to the door and is about to knock on the door when he is stopped by Mata Hari who walks besides him and stops his hand in flight just as it is about to strike the door.

MATA HARI

What about Ladoux of counter-espionage? Call you call and talk with him?

LAWYER

Margaretha … I have been to his office at French Military Intelligence several times and have been left waiting for hours. The Colonel is apparently away on assignment and his staff refuses to talk with me about you even over the telephone.

MATA HARI

Maybe if I telephone him them? Maybe they will tell me where he is. Maybe his second in command will talk with me?

LAWYER

No Margaretha … that won't be allowed. Besides he has his own problems. Ladoux maintains that he never recruited you to spy for France.

She turns away abruptly and curses.

MATA HARI

Le saloupe! (The Bastard!)

LAWYER

But now it seems a second agent has stepped forward to say Ladoux was running her the same way he ran you. She says that he made her similar promises but now is reneging with her the same way he has with you.

MATA HARI

Really … a second of Ladoux’s “non-existent” agente secrete.

LAWYER

Yes … a French woman living in Spain. She claims to be the mistress of the German Naval attaché in Madrid of all people.

MATA HARI

How thrilling!

LAWYER

She has shamed the Naval attaché publicly and now he has been recalled to Berlin. It is quite a scandal even between

belligerents … even in a time of war. Using sex to gain access to secrets. What has this war come to?

Mata Hari nervously prims herself and adjusts her hair as she states the following:

MATA HARI

Yes … what has this war come to?

The lawyer pauses to carefully observe Mata Hari for a moment. She too stops what she is doing and coyly looks back at him.

LAWYER

Rumour has it that Ladoux is to be arrested next!

MATA HARI

Given the way Ladoux has treated me … he should be the one shot at dawn … not me.

LAWYER

Were it so simple. I wish we had more time … a few days … even a few hours.

MATA HARI

I would settle for any extra time you can find me George. I do not want to die at dawn.

LAWYER

With the latest revelations, I have petitioned the judges arguing that the Boche are obviously trying to get back at Ladoux and at French Military Intelligence by making it appear that you were spying for Berlin. A quid pro quo …

MATA HARI

What does a British quid have to do with any of this? I have always been paid in French Francs.

The lawyers starts to chuckle uncontrollably. Mata Hari stares at him as if he was crazy.

MATA HARI

What's wrong with you? This is not a laughing matter. Have you been drinking again?

The lawyer stops laughing as quickly as he started.

LAWYER

Not quid as in British pound my dear. Its latin … QUID-PRO-QUO means to a trade for something.

MATA HARI

I still don’t understand.

LAWYER

I think the Boche are trying to discredit Ladoux as a counter to what French Military Intelligence has done to German Military Intelligence in Spain.

MATA HARI

Intelligence … intelligence … I have never found the military to be all that intelligent.

LAWYER

Military Intelligence is a contradiction in terms.

MATA HARI

They look so silly all dressed up in their colourful feathers like fancy fighting cocks. Take away their uniforms and they all look the same … little boys playing with big guns to make up for the fact they are little boys.

LAWYER

It may be that the two counter-espionage services are fencing with each other.

Mata Hari picks up the Lawyer's walking stick and proceeds to use it as a play sword.

MATA HARI

You boys and their games! Leave us girls out of them. If this is what is happening they are missing each other with their swords and poking me instead.

The Lawyer's motions for her walking stick back. She caresses it seductively for a moment and slowly shakes her head. He lets her keep it for the moment.

LAWYER

You might be right. You might be caught in the middle Mata Hari.

MATA HARI

I am not St. Sebastian you know. They can't just practice the Art of War by tying me to a stake and filling me full of holes.

She mocks shooting at him with the cane and then hands it back to him,

LAWYER

In their eyes, you are not a Saint by any measure Margaretha. You should never have played this game even if for French Military Intelligence. These are very dangerous times. It is hard to know who are our friends and who are not any more.

MATA HARI

George … if I had known then what I know now …

LAWYER

If you had come and talked with me about working for Ladoux I would have talked you out of it.

MATA HARI

George … I needed the money.

LAWYER

If you needed money I could have lent some to you. At least a few thousand Francs from time to time to tied you over. What are friends for? My dear you were never frugal with money.

MATA HARI

George you have never been poor. I have been poor. I can't live that life again. I would rather die then live in poverty again.

LAWYER

This war will not last forever. You should have been patient and have realized that one day things will return to the way they were before 1914.

MATA HARI

I think I will not be around to enjoy the "Good Times" if they ever return.

LAWYER

Please don’t say that. Don’t give up hope.

MATA HARI

There is not much reason to be hopeful. You have petitioned them. What have the judges to say to this?

LAWYER

They have not even acknowledged receiving my latest letter. The clerk said it may take several days before the judges even receive the letters.

MATA HARI

How can they do this to me? I don’t have several days. I don’t even have several hours.

LAWYER

They know that. The judges have closed their eyes and want to see no more, they have covered their ears and want to hear no more. They have all left Paris and two are now back at the front.

MATA HARI

The hell with them. What about President Poincare? He is still in charges isn’t he?

LAWYER

I don’t know how much power he really yields any more. The generals are very much in charge of things.

MATA HARI

Can you not ask President Poincare to stop this? Can you not convince him of my innocence?

LAWYER

I have tried with him too. No one at his office wants to confer with me about your case.

MATA HARI

Noooo … Will the President not talk to you about me?

The lawyer’s face becomes stern and he solemnly shakes his head

MATA HARI

Poincare once gave me a bouquet of red roses after he saw my fan dance in 1908. He was most insistently, as all the old men are.

LAWYER

They won't let me in to see him and so I approached him last Thursday on the steps of the Grande Opera after the concert.

MATA HARI

What did he say?

LAWYER

He let me confer with him for a moment in his car. I don't think it helped your case. The President was very angry I confronted him in public. He does not want to be seen with anyone associated with you.

MATA HARI

What else can you do at such a late hour? Especially if you are being turned away at his office.

LAWYER

Poincare says he doesn't remember ever meeting you …

MATA HARI

He would say that … the old goat.

LAWYER

He doesn't seem to remember ever seeing you dance.

MATA HARI

I remember the evening quite well. Poincare was so enchanted he dropped and broke his pince-nez.

LAWYER

Yes … come to think of it I remember that.

MATA HARI

George … were you there?

LAWYER

You forget Margaretha. That was the day we met. I waited for you at the stage door.

MATA HARI

You have a good memory George, better than mine. It seems a lifetime ago. I must have put in some performance that evening.

LAWYER

I remember waiting for over an hour in the rain after everyone else had gone. It is easy to remember meeting a beautiful woman for the first time. You haven't lost your charm given all that has happened since then.

MATA HARI

George … you flatter me.

LAWYER

I have tried everything I can think of. What else can I do but flatter?

MATA HARI

Tell them that Poincare insisted in seeing me afterwards in the privacy of my boudoir and delivered a dozen red roses to me in person.

LAWYER

Margaretha … that doesn't help much. It is common knowledge that he love roses and gives then as gifts to all his ladies.

MATA HARI

Well George … I sat on his lap.

LAWYER

You did what Margaretha!

MATA HARI

I sat on his lap and teased him abit.

He popped a few buttons. I still have them in my jewellery case. Maybe I should ask you to return them to him. That should refresh his memory? Where is my jewellery case when I need it?

LAWYER

Perhaps we should send them to his wife? Margaretha … you've never sat on my lap.

Mata Hari guides the Lawyer to the bed and gets him to sit. With great flourish she lifts her dress, bares her bottom and settles in on his lap.

MATA HARI

Better late than never. Is that better George?

LAWYER

Much …

MATA HARI

You know the buttons were not off his vest.

LAWYER

His jacket perhaps?

Mata Hari shakes her head.

LAWYER

Oh … No wonder his private secretary has told me to stop trying to involve le President de la Republique en question de Madame Mata Hari.

MATA HARI

Well big surprise. The old goat is obviously senile. Big wonder the allies are losing the war.

LAWYER

You should stop saying that! The guards may be listening at the door.

MATA HARI

Sure they are listening! What are they going to do? Shoot me!

Mata Hari starts to tussle his hair and unbutton his vest.

LAWYER

Stop that Margaretha.

MATA HARI

Please George.

LAWYER

I am only allowed to visit you. Nothing else. You can always torment the guard.

Mata Hari slaps him and bolts to her feet. George is left sitting on the cot speechless. The door swings open and the old guard appears with rifle at the ready.

OLD GUARD

What's going on here?

LAWYER

Nothing … we are just conferring.

He loads a round in the breech and lifts his rifle.

OLD GUARD

What happened?

The lawyer stands and does up the buttons on his vest.

LAWYER

Careful … old soldier. It might go off.

OLD GUARD

Tonight I am responsible for her. Tell me what happened?

LAWYER

I tried to take certain liberties with Madame …

OLD GUARD

Monsieur I will allow none of that. Apologize to the lady.

The old guard motions at the lawyer with his rifle. The lawyer draws his hand through his hair and bows to Mata Hari.

LAWYER

I apologize to Madame.

OLD GUARD

Monsieur … anymore of that and I will lock you up in the cell across the hall.

LAWYER

There will be no need for that I will be leave shortly.

The old guard shoulders his rifle, turns to Mata Hari and salutes.

OLD GUARD

If there is anything that Madame needs I am just outside the door.

MATA HARI

You are a gentleman after all.

OLD GUARD

Madame, I have a wife and three daughters.

MATA HARI

So you have a heart.

OLD GUARD

As much of a heart that a soldier can have after three years of bloody war.

The old guard turns and leaves the cell, closing but not bolting the door behind him.

MATA HARI

Did you hear that! He called me Madame.

LAWYER

You have always had a way with men. You may end up having your way after all.

MATA HARI

George … let me feel sorry for myself. No one seems to be worrying about me.

LAWYER

I am worried for you.

MATA HARI

You are my lawyer … you should be worried for me.

LAWYER

Am I just your lawyer? Am I also not your friend?

MATA HARI

You should stop saying that!

LAWYER

Why?

MATA HARI

At dawn George you may end up standing besides me. There are plenty of bullets to go around.

LAWYER

They can't just shoot you for nothing. Even in war.

MATA HARI

Sure they can. Look at me … I am innocent and look at what they are going to do to me. They can do anything in war. You of all people should know that!

LAWYER

War has not always been like that. This war … this Great Patriotic War … this calamity is so different from 1870. This will be France's undoing.

MATA HARI

France … what about Europe. Europe is more than just France and Germany. There are many other smaller countries. Look at what has happened to them. Look what has happened to my homeland Holland. Both sides are slaughtering innocent

people … the French … the Germans … everyone. Men … women … children. And they think I have something to do with the slaughter!

LAWYER

Let us not talk about this. Matters are as upsetting as they can be presently. Let us not make matters worst between us.

MATA HARI

I have never harmed anyone in my life. It is me who has been harmed. When I mentioned this to the judges at my court martial they ignored me.

LAWYER

Margaretha they were all generals at your court martial. Their job is to make war. You were calling the kettle black.

MATA HARI

They weren't blackened kettles … they were Cracked Pots.

LAWYER

The generals at your court martial had their orders.

MATA HARI

And who gave the people … who gave the generals … their orders?

The lawyer takes out a cigarette case and offers one to Mata Hari, who declines. He lights a cigarette and blows a ring into the air. Studying it as it floats away.

LAWYER

Their orders probably came down from the very top!

MATA HARI

From the old goat who can't even remember ever meeting me! The blind leading the deaf and the dumb! How convenient it is to use me as a scapegoat for their stupidity.

LAWYER

Push after push after unsuccessful push. The poor boys mowed down in the thousands. The allies are doing badly now that the Russians have left the war.

MATA HARI

It is so easy for the Generals to blame the bad news on traitors and spies.
But surely the Americans should be able to help the French …

LAWYER

They have only just arrived. The Yanks don't really know how to fight in a modern war. Their experiences during their Civil War fifty years ago hasn't prepared them for the Western Front. Besides it may be too little … too late for the French.

MATA HARI

So what else is new? The French army have never really been disciplined. Not like the Bosche.

LAWYER

Mata Hari … is there something you know that I should?

MATA HARI

I heard the guards talking about this.

LAWYER

Oh …. I see. Yes … it takes time to learn how to fight.

MATA HARI

I thought it wasn't that hard to do. All you need are a handful of soldiers. Give then some rifles and a few bullets, and watch what happens.

LAWYER

It isn't that simple Margaretha.

MATA HARI

Sure it is … just come and watch at dawn tomorrow. Twelve soldiers, eleven bullets… one target … Me. Bet they won't miss. War at its finest! First the women, then the children and if there are any bullets left over shoot the soldiers then.

LAWYER

I don't think I will be able to stand and watch them shoot you.

MATA HARI

And why not? If you are not there I shall be all by myself …

LAWYER

I can't …

MATA HARI

George I do not want to die alone.

LAWYER

It will break my heart to watch.

MATA HARI

It will shatter mine … they will pin a target over my heart and their eleven sharp unforgiving bullets will tear into it making many little pieces. And with my shattered heart … will die all my loves.

LAWYER

I will be there at dawn but only because I am your friend and not because I am your lawyer. I may be the only one there for you.

MATA HARI

Doesn't anyone else care at all? And what about the Ministers I mentioned?

LAWYER

They have all left Paris and gone into the hiding with their wives … every last one of them!

MATA HARI

There was a time when these very men would sit at my feet. They showered me with wealth beyond imagining. Now they avoid me like the plague. Look at how far I have fallen!

Mata Hari turns her back at the lawyer and cries into her hands.

LAWYER

Madame you should never have returned to France from Spain.

MATA HARI

I had to … where else could I go?

LAWYER

Back home to Holland for the duration perhaps.

MATA HARI

And do what? I am not allowed to dance in Holland. They think it is immoral.

LAWYER

If you had gone back home you could have lived a long and safer life ….

MATA HARI

And what now?

LAWYER

I would send for a priest and make your confessions.

MATA HARI

There will be time enough for that.

She stands tall and dignified.

MATA HARI

All that I have left is my dignity … they cannot take that away from me …

LAWYER

Yes Margaretha …

Mata Hari stands and regally walks over to her lawyer and gives him a big hug and a kiss.

MATA HARI

Thank you for everything you have done for me. I know you have done your best, George.

LAWYER

I wish I had been able to do more ...

MATA HARI

Treason in France normally means Madame la Guillotine.

LAWYER

Oui …

MATA HARI

I am glad I will not make her acquaintance. It is quite gruesome …

The Lawyer nods. Mata Hari accidentally steps back. She knocks over the chair, which rolls across the floor like a head at the guillotine. The lawyer picks the stool up.

MATA HARI

I am told after you lose your head and while it rolls across the floor you are still conscious.

LAWYER

At least with the Guillotine … all you feel is a pinch on the back of the neck and then unconsciousness and then nothing.

MATA HARI

Before they do shoot me I must get myself ready. Do they not give me the condemned a fitting last meal. Look at what they have brought me.

Her lawyer walks over and studies the tray of food next to the door.

LAWYER

Old stale bread and mouldy cheese. This will not do. What do you what?

MATA HARI

A hot bath, a proper last supper … and my trunk of clothes ….

LAWYER

The kitchen is probably long closed.

MATA HARI

That is not my problem. Tell them the condemned would like potage and a salad, fowl and vegetables and fresh fruit and coffee, real coffee!

LAWYER

We are in the middle of a war … and the middle of October. Where are they going to get lettuce and tomatoes for salads. And fresh fruit?

MATA HARI

I can tell you that they are serving this at Les Grande tables in Paris. Get them to deliver ….

LAWYER

Deliver?

MATA HARI

We are just ten minutes by car to the train station and only thirty minutes to the centre of Paris by train. Get someone to go and ask the chef at Hotel Athenes … he will do this for an old friend.

LAWYER

I will talk with the Colonel. You may have to settle for hot soup or porridge.

MATA HARI

That will not do! Tell him what I want … and a hot bath …

LAWYER

I think he will agree to allow you to have a hot bath. That will not be too difficult to sort out.

MATA HARI

And my trunk and my clothes …

LAWYER

They will want to check everything in your trunk before they give you your things.

MATA HARI

Tell them to be careful and not damage my things. They are expensive silks, dresses, shoes and the like.

LAWYER

And … someone will have to stay with you will you prepare yourself.

MATA HARI

Why my dear friend?… I know how to bath and dress myself.

LAWYER

I think they are worried you will do yourself in? You know … hang your self.

MATA HARI

And rob them of their satisfaction?

LAWYER

Rules are rules Margaretha.

MATA HARI

Since when do I follow the rules?

LAWYER

… And look where that has gotten you.

MATA HARI

It is the war that has gotten me here … I have done nothing that I am ashamed of!

The Lawyer gives her a stern look and addresses her…

LAWYER

I know you continue to profess your innocence … but when you accepted money from the German Imperial Government . as far as the French Government is concerned you became an enemy of La Republique.

MATA HARI

I needed the money … no one in Paris was interested in seeing me dance.

LAWYER

Do you blame them … during war time … only les industrialistes make money and they don't spend money on exotic dancers … you should have gone home to Holland when you had the chance … and waited for the war to end.

MATA HARI

I guess it is too late to be wise. Maybe they will let me go if I say I will go home and leave them alone.

The lawyer shakes his head.

LAWYER

It is too late for that. You might have asked that at your trial.

She goes to the door and tries to open it. It rattles but remains bolted. She tries the same with the barred window. Then she walks over to study a mouse hole opposite the door. And looks in the mouse hole. Mata Hari walks over to the mouldy cheese. She scrapes away some of the mould then places the cheese in front of the mouse hole.

LAWYER

War affects us all… whether we think so or not. It affects your friends even Les Ministres.

MATA HARI

There is not much difference between being a minister and a mistress.

The lawyer frowns.

MATA HARI

Tell the Colonel what I want … and that I have no intention of robbing history of my injustice.

LAWYER

Yes Madame ….

MATA HARI

And tell them I shall bravely stand before them … Mata Hari … The Eye of the Dawn.

LAWYER

Yes Margaretha …

MATA HARI

I will give them something to watch at dawn! It will be history that will judge them … not me. For I am innocent.

She sweeps her hand up over her forehead and strikes a pose.

MATA HARI

Dawn tomorrow will be my finest performance. In a short time no one will remember their names … but they will remember mine!

LAWYER

I will try to get you your things … your trunk …. a bath and a better meal.

MATA HARI

Go then ...

LAWYER

And if he refuses to see me.

Mata Hari walks over to the barred window and pauses for a moment then she turns to the Lawyer.

MATA HARI

> Tell the Colonel … if he grants me my last wishes … I will behave myself tomorrow at dawn. I will give him no trouble …

LAWYER

> Oui Margaretha …..

The Lawyer bows and kisses her hand. She places her hand on his head and massages his hair. He stands and he grabs her … he tries to kiss her but she turns her cheek. He kisses her passionately on the cheek.

MATA HARI

> Remember the last time we spent an evening together…. Before all this?

LAWYER

> My dear … that I will never forget, that night it will be my last thoughts as I leave this terrible world. May I ask you something …

MATA HARI

Anything …

LAWYER

Why is it we have never shared a bed …?

MATA HARI

I never shared a bed with anyone after I divorced … because of something my husband gave me

LAWYER

I don't understand.

MATA HARI

My husband picked his affliction up at a brothel in the far east. On our wedding night he gave it to me and before I knew it I had given it to our children. It is what killed my son and daughter. My son went blind before he died.

LAWYER

Oh … C'est terrible.

The Lawyer bows his head and makes the sign of the cross.

MATA HARI

What is it about this place?

LAWYER

Quoi?

MATA HARI

Every two minutes someone is making the sign of the cross.

LAWYER

Maybe we are all tired and worried. It is a nunnery after all.

MATA HARI

And what about me? Figure they to shoot me at a nunnery. What did Shakespeare once say ? … Too late for me here. I am getting very tired!

The lawyer hugs her again and kisses her on the other cheek.

MATA HARI

My husband was a terrible man. He knew he had this affliction yet he wed me, bed me and then fathered my two children.

LAWYER

What happened to him?

MATA HARI

He died of his own affliction syphilis … divorced, all alone and penniless. It was then that I decided to try to make a name for myself … so I too did not die alone and destitute.

There is an awkward silence between the two of them.

MATA HARI

As plain old Margaretha, divorcee I was nothing. As Mata Hari … I was someone. I could make a name for myself.

LAWYER

Yes you really made a name for yourself. The Frenchmen love their Courtesans.

MATA HARI

But I was not a Courtesan.

LAWYER

You did have many Parisians who courted you.

MATA HARI

Yes … I had many admirers who tried to bed me.

LAWYER

I was one of them!

MATA HARI

I had to rebuff you several times George.

LAWYER

There was no harm trying was there?

MATA HARI

You were very persuasive. Had you not ever wondered why I only danced … or sat for photographs?

LAWYER

Now I know … I enjoyed your dancing … especially when we were alone and you danced just for me.

MATA HARI

Maybe there will time for one more dance?

LAWYER

Or one last photograph?

He shakes his head. The lawyer takes out and looks at his pocket watch. She yawns and stretches.

LAWYER

Time for me to go and make my telephone inquiries.

MATA HARI

I will be waiting for your return.

After the moment, the Lawyer walks over to the door, straightens himself out and knocks. The door is opened and the guard appears.

LAWYER

I wish to talk with the Colonel.

The guard looks up at Mata Hari and then at the Lawyer.

OLD GUARD

If you insist … he will not be very happy being disturbed this early in the morning… can it not wait until when he comes to collect the condemned?

LAWYER

Non … corporal … I must see the Colonel immediately!

OLD GUARD

Bien … suivez moi monsieur.

After the lawyer leaves the cell the old guard turns and addresses the condemned.

OLD GUARD

Madame … you should try to get some sleep …

Mata Hari walks over to the table and picks up the tea cup before walking back to the cot. She takes a few more sips from the tea and then sets the teacup down next to the cot and rubs her eyes. She gives another great big yawn and lays down.

MATA HARI

I will close my eyes for a few minutes …

Mata Hari lays on the bed and turns her face towards the wall before falling asleep.

A few minutes later the door quietly opens and the old guard peers in. He quietly enters, walks over to the bed and looks down at Mata Hari asleep on the bed. The old guard pulls the blankets over Mata Hari.

He walks back to the door and turns the lights off before quietly closing the door behind himself as he leaves.

NUN RETURNS INT NIGHT

The door opens and a young nun enters. She looks like a younger sister to the older nun.

She looks at the tray of old bread and what is left of mouldy cheese. She looks at Mata Hari who is still sleeping. The nun walks over to the bed and wakes Mata Hari.

YOUNG NUN

Madame does not like her dinner?

MATA HARI

Non Soeur ...

YOUNG NUN

I am not your sister …

MATA HARI

You are a nun … are you not?

YOUNG NUN

Yes I am …

MATA HARI

And I am a creature of God?

YOUNG NUN

That I am not so sure.

MATA HARI

Soeur … I am baptized …I went to my first communion and have been a good girl …

YOUNG NUN

A good girl … that is not what I have heard. They plan to shoot you at dawn. They don't shoot good girls.

MATA HARI

I am innocent … you must believe me Soeur.

YOUNG NUN

The French Army do not shoot the innocent …

MATA HARI

In war the innocent suffer the most … they are shot, bombed and gassed.

The young nun stares at her.

YOUNG NUN

And what is this nonsense about a warm bath … it is midnight for heaven's sake.

MATA HARI

I would normally take my bath early in morning. Somehow I do not think they will let me keep them waiting.

The old nun picks up the food plate and does the sign of the cross. Mata Hari does the same.

MATA HARI

Soeur I will need someone to help me to get ready…my hands are shaking!

YOUNG NUN

I will ask to see whether they will let me wake one of the older orphan girls …

MATA HARI

Thank you Soeur ….

The old nun shakes her fist at MATA HARI.

YOUNG NUN

But remember this … the first sign of trouble and I will beat you silly.

MATA HARI

Yes Soeur …

YOUNG NUN

I may be a nun but don't think I can't do it. I grew up with two older brothers. I am after all responsible for the orphans.

MATA HARI

Soeur you know … I once had a son and a daughter …

YOUNG NUN

Once?

MATA HARI

My children are both dead.

YOUNG NUN

The war?

MATA HARI

No …. They caught something and died long before the war … first my son and then my daughter.

YOUNG NUN

And your husband?

MATA HARI

He is dead. He gave my children what he had caught in the far east?

The eyes of the young nun grows large ….

YOUNG NUN

How old was your daughter?

MATA HARI

Twelve …

YOUNG NUN

And your son?

MATA HARI

Nine …

YOUNG NUN

So young …

The nun kneels she motions Mata Hari to join her. She kneels and joins her.

YOUNG NUN

Let us say our prayers for your children …

The young nun says the Latin prayer for the dead.

MATA HARI

Amen

There is a knock at the door and the door opens. In walks the guard.

GUARD

What is going on?

MATA HARI

The sister and I have said a prayer for my dead children.

GUARD

Do not fret Madame … you will soon be joining them …

YOUNG NUN

Monsieur! …

The nun stands and shakes her fist at the guard. Mata Hari slowly stands.

YOUNG NUN

Shame on you!

GUARD

Leave me alone. I don’t like this any more than you do sister.

YOUNG NUN

Then hold your tongue!

Mata Hari puts her hands on her hips and addresses the guard.

MATA HARI

Well then … will I join my children in Heaven?

GUARD

Either there or in the other place Madame? It will depend on whether you are innocent like you say you are.

The young nun walks over and stands in front of the guard.

YOUNG NUN

Enfant … you have no heart?

GUARD

After three years in the army sister I have no heart left. I have seen all my friends die a miserable death in the trenches. The war has robbed me of any compassion I once had.

YOUNG NUN

You are no longer at the front. You are safe west of Paris.

GUARD

Safe for now sister… but it is only two hours by truck to the front. And les Bosches have not given up. Besides death will visit this place in a few hours and I will have to be part of his handy work. … I am sorry Madame.

MATA HARI

I forgive you monsieur. I know you mean no harm.

YOUNG NUN

Tell the Colonel I am waking one of the orphan children to help Madame prepare.

MATA HARI

Thank you Soeur …

YOUNG NUN

Il ne a pas de quoi. I shall return with someone to help you get ready.

THE MOUSE'S VISIT INT NIGHT

The door is close. A mouse appears at the mouse hole. It looks into the cell for a moment. Mata Hari notices the mouse but does not react.

The mouse takes hold of the cheese and starts to nibble at it. Mata Hari talks to the mouse.

MATA HARI

Lucky you. I hope you enjoy the cheese.

The mouse stops eating the cheese and looks up at her.

MATA HARI

Do you visit many guests here in your prison?

The mouse preens itself and approaches Mata Hari carrying the cheese.

MATA HARI

You are the only one here who is free to move about. Even the guards are prisoners here.

The mouse approaches even closer. The mouse is looking up at Mata Hari.

MATA HARI

When I was very young I had a pet mouse just like you. Her name was Elsa.

MATA HARI

We were very poor and I had to hide Elsa from my parents. Elsa would come and visit me after dark and I would feed it food I brought up from the kitchen by candlelight.

There is a sound at the door. The mouse looks towards the door, grabs the cheese and runs back into her mouse hole.

MATA HARI

Don’t worry my little friend … they aren’t coming for you.

LAWYER'S SECOND VISIT INT NIGHT

The mouse disappears into the mouse hole just as the guard knocks and the door swings opens. It is the laywer returning.

LAWYER

I have spoken with the Colonel.

MATA HARI

And …

LAWYER

He will provide you with a bath

MATA HARI

That's grand. The sister must have talked with him.

LAWYER

She did and the Colonel has also agreed to let you have your trunk but it will be searched first.

MATA HARI

That's fine … as long as I have my things after my bath. And what about my last supper?

LAWYER

He does not think he can provide you with the grand supper you have asked for.

Mata Hari stands in a very agitated mood … she waves her hand regally through the air.

MATA HARI

The Hell with the Colonel then … telephone Phillip the head chef at l'Hotel Athenes and ask him to prepare and bring my last supper to me.

LAWYER

The Colonel won't be too happy if I do this,

MATA HARI

Don’t tell him then. Forgiveness is easier to get than permission.

LAWYER

He will be angry.

MATA HARI

He must let me have my last supper. After this morning it will be your problem. Besides Philip owes me.

LAWYER

What do I say to Phillip then?

MATA HARI

When you telephone him just tell him what I want and if he says no … then mention to him that I know about his collection prive of photographs.

LAWYER

Photographs?

MATA HARI

It is quite a collection. My photograph are just modest compared to the really naughty ones.

LAWYER

I don't know if blackmail is a good idea.

MATA HARI

Phillip has a friend who runs a small photo shop in Montmatre. All the models and their friends have gone there to get their pictures taken. Even Picasso. I have gone there a few times myself.

LAWYER

And so?

MATA HARI

His friend told me about Phillip's collection. He has some photographs he should not have and would compromise important society people.

LAWYER

Oh … I see … I will talk with Phillip.

MATA HARI

Ask him to deliver my last supper in person and to bring a nice bottle of wine.

LAWYER

What about the guard? How will get Phillip and your meal past him?

MATA HARI

Maybe ask Phillip to bring another bottle of fine wine for the guard along with something for him to eat. I suspect the guard hasn't had a good meal in at least three years.

LAWYER

I will try my best.

MATA HARI

> And ask Phillip to be here no later than 3:00. I will want to enjoy my last meal and not be rushed.

The lawyer walks over to the door and knocks. The guard opens the door and the lawyer nods at Mata Hari and exits without saying anything.

BATHING INT NIGHT

A standing bath is brought in and placed in the centre of the room. It is shaped in a half oyster shell. Several brass buckets of hot water are brought in as well. A young woman comes in, introduces herself and proceeds to help Mata Hari get ready for her bath.

Mata Hari stands with her back to the audience behind a screen. You see her head and neck at the top of the screen and her feet and the bath at the bottom of the screen.

The young woman lifts and pours one of the buckets of hot water on her and then takes a cloth, wets it, rubs in some soap and then begins to wash Mata Hari.

Mata Hari is in a bath having her back scrubbed. The young woman scrubbing her back is sombre and serious. The young woman is nervous and drops the soap.

YOUNG WOMAN

I am sorry Madame.

MATA HARI

Why are you so nervous?

YOUNG WOMAN

My job every evening is to wash the younger children before they are put to bed.

MATA HARI

All the children … both the girls and the boys?

YOUNG WOMAN

Only the younger ones … the girls love bath time. The boys hate it.

She drops the soap a second time.

YOUNG WOMAN

It's the middle of the night. I am very sleepy …

MATA HARI

Is that all?

WOMAN

Well … you are very pretty Madame. I have never done this before.

MATA HARI

Do not be shy … we woman have nothing to hide from each other.

YOUNG WOMAN

I don’t let anyone bath me. I bath by myself …

MATA HARI

I have let men pay to do this …

YOUNG WOMAN

You would!

MATA HARI

and to watch too. some of the great artists like would draw as woman took their bath.

YOUNG WOMAN

Really Madame …

MATA HARI

There is a wonderful painting … le dejeuner sur l’herbe. … two men at a picnic with two woman. One is bathing in a pond and the other is sitting nude with the two men talking.

YOUNG WOMAN

Sorry Madame … but I still don’t believe you.

MATA HARI

The painting sits on the wall in a museum in Paris. At least it did before the war began … before the Germans began to bombard Paris with their shells.

YOUNG WOMAN

Why would anyone paint such a scene?

MATA HARI

You know … you think it’s a picnic … but there isn’t a wine bottle in the painting. They are there for another reason …

YOUNG WOMAN

And what would that be?

MATA HARI

I will let you figure that out …

Mata Hari draws her hand down the side of her figure following the curve without touching her skin. The young woman blushes and draws her hand to her mouth.

YOUNG WOMAN

Madame!

MATA HARI

My dear … do you know why god created woman after man?

The young woman shakes her head. Mata Hari turns to face the audience and in a pose reminiscent of The Birth of Venus continues. She wraps a towel around herself and starts to dry herself

MATA HARI

God created woman after man because she learned from her mistakes   She won an award for the creation of woman.

YOUNG WOMAN

That’s not what the nuns teach us here.

MATA HARI

What do they teach you?

YOUNG WOMAN

They teach us about Adam and Eve and original sin.

MATA HARI

What would the nuns know about sin? Are they not suppose to be chaste?

YOUNG WOMAN

They teach us that we are all born with original sin.

MATA HARI

A child is a gift from god. If we are born with original sin then he has made a mistake.

YOUNG WOMAN

Madame … I don't understand. A moment ago you said that God was a woman.

MATA HARI

I would like to think that God is female. Woman bring life into the world. Looking at this terrible war and all its death and suffering … how can God be a man?

YOUNG WOMAN

Huh … Madame let me dry your hair.

Mata Hari goes to her trunk and removes a robe. She removes the towel around her and wraps herself in a purple robe and puts slippers on her feet. Then she sits on the edge of the cot and the young woman dries her hair with a towel. Mata Hari closes her eyes and begins to rock slowly. Neither of them are talking. The lights dim somewhat to give the moment a sleepy air.

MATA HARI

Well my dear … thank you for helping me with my bath. It is late I would normally sleep in on a cold October day like today.

YOUNG WOMAN

I don't think they will let you do that today.

MATA HARI

Of all days … when I need my beauty sleep.

The young woman begins to cry.

MATA HARI

Now now … my dear. Do not cry. Soon I will have plenty of time to sleep … besides I have had a very good life.

MATA HARI

We have been talking for so long but I have yet to ask … what is your name dear?

The young woman stops crying, then composes herself before she curtsies.

YOUNG WOMAN

Marie-Eve … Madame.

MATA HARI

That is a pretty name … You are named after the first temptress of men.

YOUNG WOMAN

Madame?

MATA HARI

Eve … who offered man the forbidden fruit …

YOUNG WOMAN

Oh … you mean Adam and Eve … from the Bible.

MATA HARI

Yes she offered him her pear and as a result was thrown out of paradise by the archangel Gabriel.

YOUNG WOMAN

You mean an apple?

MATA HARI

That's not how the story was told to me. She gave him her pear … You know Marie – Eve … the name of my first love was Gabriel. He threw me out of paradise when I was sixteen.

YOUNG WOMAN

Threw you out of Paradise?

MATA HARI

We were in school together. He was a grade older than me. We went for a long walk one day in the summer of 1880 and well …l met the serpent for the first time.

YOUNG WOMAN

You met the serpent Madame?

MATA HARI

Child … do you not know anything about life …

YOUNG WOMAN

Life … only what I learned on the farm Madame,, watching the calves being birthed by their mothers..

MATA HARI

So you know where the birds and the bees come from then?

YOUNG WOMAN

They come from God … don't they Madame.

MATA HARI

You are so sweet and innocent … How old are you?

YOUNG WOMAN

I will be seventeen in December.

MATA HARI

And how many lovers have you had?

YOUNG WOMAN

Lovers?

The young woman lowers her head and blushes.

MATA HARI

Don’t tell me that you are an un-blossomed flower!

YOUNG WOMAN

Un-blossomed?

MATA HARI

You have never been with a man have you?

The young woman shakes her head.

MATA HARI

Have you not even thought about what a man looks like?

YOUNG WOMAN

I saw my father once when he was stepping out of the bath. It all seemed a little funny to me.

MATA HARI

How old were you?

YOUNG WOMAN

Nine … My father found out, got angry and spanked me.

MATA HARI

When it comes to natural curiosity … there's nothing wrong with that…. Its called being a voyeur my dear.

YOUNG WOMAN

Voyeur … you mean to watch …

MATA HARI

And you have not even thought about this since?

YOUNG WOMAN

No Madame.

MATA HARI

Men are natural voyeurs … we women less so.

MATA HARI

Along with watching me bathe …you know Marie-Eve I had men pay me to watch me undress while I danced ... That's what made me so famous.

YOUNG WOMAN

Madame! Were you not ashamed?

MATA HARI

Ashamed … but why my dear?

YOUNG WOMAN

To be … sans habitment.

MATA HARI

I have never been ashamed about how I look.

Mata Hari looks her up and down.

MATA HARI

Nor should you!

Almost in a whisper the Marie-Eve asks.

YOUNG WOMAN

Did they pay you very much?

MATA HARI

To begin with not very much … but later well I became one of the wealthiest woman in Europe. But when you start from poverty there is only one way to go …

YOUNG WOMAN

Up …

MATA HARI

Yes dear … from poverty up to wealth and security.

At this point Mata Hari looks down and notices that Marie-Eve has bare feet.

MATA HARI

My dear where are your shoes?

YOUNG WOMAN

Outside Madame. They were covered in mud.

MATA HARI

Your feet must be very cold. Here show me your foot.

The woman offers her a foot. Mata Hari sees that her feet are red and cold.

MATA HARI

Go look in my trunk … There are some gray shoes with laces …

YOUNG WOMAN

If I do this I will get into trouble.

MATA HARI

If they fit you … you can have them.

YOUNG WOMAN

Really … Madame!

MATA HARI

It is not like I will need them again. Oh and you might want to put on a pair of socks.

The young woman's eyes grow large and excited. She rushes over to the trunk and opens the lid and looks in. Mata Hari is standing next to the bath drying herself.

YOUNG WOMAN

Look at all these clothes!

MATA HARI

Leave the clothes for now… Have you found the shoes?

YOUNG WOMAN

Oui madame.

MATA HARI

Come here and I will wash your feet …

YOUNG WOMAN

Wash my feet?

MATA HARI

Here … sort of like what they do at church during lent. Put your feet in the tub.

The young woman walks over to the tub and then puts a foot in. Mata Hari washes that foot, then the girl puts the other foot in and Mata Hari washes that foot as well,

MATA HARI

Now dry then well. I don’t want you to catch your death of a cold.

The young woman slowly and carefully dries her feet.

MATA HARI

I think the pink stockings would look nice on you.

The young woman stands and walks over to the trunk. She searches for and takes a pair of pink silk stockings from the trunk. They are wrapped in paper and have never been used.

YOUNG WOMAN

The stockings are so soft and beautiful.

MATA HARI

Only something pink and soft should be next to your skin … don’t you think? Come stand here and let me put them on for you.

The young woman stands while and Mata Hari put the stockings on her, with two garters, then the shoes … she takes her time to lace the shoes.

YOUNG WOMAN

I have never had anything so soft next to my skin.

MATA HARI

Luscious isn't it. Your dress looks so rough and drab.

YOUNG WOMAN

It is the only one I have got.

MATA HARI

What … Let me find you a better dress.

YOUNG WOMAN

Really Madame … I do not think the nuns will let me keep a pretty dress and such fine shoes.

MATA HARI

Why should they care? I am free to give away my things to whomever I want. They are after all my things.

YOUNG WOMAN

If you give me anything they will take it away and sell it. They need to find food for the young orphans who are here. I am one of the older ones.

MATA HARI

Where are your parents?

YOUNG WOMAN

My father died two summers ago. He was gassed at the front and died several weeks later in the hospital of pneumonia. My mother died that December … I think she died of a broken heart.

MATA HARI

How long have you been here?

YOUNG WOMAN

Not long. Just a few months. There are some children that have been here since before the war. These little ones have terrible nightmares. I sometimes stay up all night, hold them and rock them asleep.

MATA HARI

I think I understand why the sister chose you to come help me.

YOUNG WOMAN

Why?

MATA HARI

You will not have nightmares.

YOUNG WOMAN

Why do you say this?

MATA HARI

They shoot me at dawn!

Before the young woman could react the door opens and two soldiers enter to collect the bath and buckets.

Mata Hari is still in her robes. She starts to hum an exotic tune and dance around the room. The guards stop what they are doing and watch.

Marie – Eve watches both Mata Hari and the men. They can't take their eyes off of her.

As they work she flirts and teases the guards they nearly spill one of the buckets.

YOUNG SOLDIER

She's crazy!

OLD SOLDIER

Now you can tell your grand children you watched the great Mata Hari dance. Let's get out of here before the Colonel catches us and sends us back to the front.

Mata Hari laughs a hysterical laugh. The soldier leave in an awkward hurry ... then she notices the woman is crying.

MATA HARI

There … there my dear be brave. We must all die sometime! I am just another casualty of war, just like you …

Marie – Eve continues to weep but not as fiercely. Mata Hari walks over to her and stops to admire her face. She wipes away the tears with the corner of her robe and then walks over to the trunk reaches into the trunk and lifts out a dress and presses it against the young woman.

MATA HARI

Look at that. You are about my size! Try the dress on.

The young woman looks a moment and admires the fineness of the dress then draws her old threadbare dress off. Mata Hari helps her into the new dress then laces it up for her. She turns the young woman around to see how the dress fits.

MATA HARI

It fits you very well.   You will fill out more still.

YOUNG WOMAN

Thank you. You are very kind and generous Madame …

MATA HARI

You are very welcome my dear.

YOUNG WOMAN

Why did you dance when the soldiers were here? .

MATA HARI

I danced because I wanted to my dear. I am still free to dance, even if they have locked me here and intend to end my life at dawn. Dawn hasn't arrived yet.

Mata Hari stands and begins to dance with the young woman, who is awkward at first but quickly picks it up.

MATA HARI

You dance well. Can I tell you a secret?

YOUNG WOMAN

Yes …

MATA HARI

You notice how attentive the soldiers were of me while I danced?

The young woman nods.

MATA HARI

They call us the weaker sex …but we woman have great power over men. If we merely crossed out legs for a month … the war in Europe would end in two.

The young woman laughs. Mata Hari joins her and they hug. There is noise and motion outside the barred windows. It is the changing of the guards. This brings the two of them back to reality.

YOUNG WOMAN

Let me help you with your dress.

Quietly the two dress her in a plain grey dress with a matching hat. Just as they finished there is a knock at the door and the door swings open. The same two soldiers bring in two large picnic baskets and sets them on the table.

DINNER ARRIVES INT NIGHT

In enters the Lawyer followed by a tall thin man. The young woman wants to leave but Mata Hari grabs her by the arm and guides her to the cot and motions for her to sit down and stay. Mata Hari turns back to her visitors.

MATA HARI

Phillip you came!

CHEF

Yes I did.

MATA HARI

I am glad. What did you bring me?

She rushes over to the table and opens the two baskets and starts to poke around looking at its contents.

CHEF

What … no kiss for George and me?

MATA HARI

Of course … of course … how rude of me.

She rushes over and hugs and kisses Philip. Then she turns to George.

CHEF

That’s much better. When George came and asked me I dropped everything. Just like old times heh miss.

MATA HARI

Thanks Philip. I didn’t want to meet my end on an empty stomach.

She turns to the Lawyer.

MATA HARI

Any news?

The Lawyer shakes his head and says nothing. Mata Hari turns back to the table and stops.

CHEF

Let me lay out the table.

He starts to take things out of the basket and place it on the table, starting with a table cloth and a bottle with a candle which he lights.

Philip takes a bottle of champagne out and hands it to George who proceeds to open it. The cork pops. George fills a glass and hands it to Mata Hari.

MATA HARI

Merci George. Let us party like there is no tomorrow.

LAWYER

How fitting. Knowing you and your parties … let us not drink too much shall we. We must both keep our wits.

The lawyer turns to the young woman sitting on the cot.

LAWYER

Who is this?

MATA HARI

This is Marie-Eve. She has been helping me get ready. Doesn't she look pretty?

LAWYER

How do you do miss. Do you live here in the orphanage?

YOUNG WOMAN

Yes sir. I do.

LAWYER

Not one for many words are you little one.

YOUNG WOMAN

Sir, I have been told never to talk with strangers.

MATA HARI

I am a stranger and you talk to me.

The young woman points at the lawyer.

YOUNG WOMAN

You are a lady, Madame. He is a stranger.

MATA HARI

George, I think she means you are a man and therefore not to be trusted.

The lawyer is annoyed.

LAWYER

I am a solicitor Miss.

MATA HARI

You solicit do you …. George I think she has a point, don't you.

LAWYER

If you can't trust a lawyer … who can you trust.

MATA HARI

George … I think you should stop while you are still ahead … barely ahead.

The young woman giggles.

CHEF

The table is set and the dinner is ready miss.

George moves the stool to the table so that Mata Hari can sit. She motions to Marie-Eve to join her.

MATA HARI

Here sit on my lap Marie-Eve and have some dinner.

The young woman walks over to the table. She had never before seen such opulence and admires the setting. The chef offers her a piece of pate on a cracker. While she is distracted Mata Hari gently pulls her down onto her lap.

MATA HARI

Were my daughter still alive she would be about your age.

YOUNG WOMAN

What happened to your daughter?

MATA HARI

She died when she was nine.

YOUNG WOMAN

Did she die in the war?

MATA HARI

No she died before the war, when we lived in the Far East. She died of consumption and pneumonia.

YOUNG WOMAN

That's very sad Madame. You must miss her very much.

MATA HARI

I miss both my son and my daughter.

YOUNG WOMAN

You had a family?

MATA HARI

Not any more. George here is all I have … and you Philip. You have always been kind to me too.

George reaches down and kisses Mata Hari's hand. Then he takes up Marie-Eve's hand and kisses it as well. The young woman quickly takes away her hand.

CHEF

It is nice of you to say this miss. It has always been a pleasure to serve you.

MATA HARI

Join me in a toast.

The chef produces two other glasses and fills them full of champagne.

LAWYER

What is there to toast at such a solemn moment?

Mata Hari looks around at her grim surroundings and then fixates on Marie-Eve.

MATA HARI

There is Marie-Eve. Let us toast her beauty and youth.

Marie-Eve drops her head and blushes.

CHEF

To her beauty!

LAWYER

To her youth.

Mata Hari offers Marie-Eve her glass.

MATA HARI

Here dear have a sip.

Marie-Eve reluctantly eyes the glass before she sips a little bit of champagne.

MATA HARI

Well?

YOUNG WOMAN

I have never had champagne before.

MATA HARI

Never! There are so many things you have never done before … is there.

YOUNG WOMAN

It tastes good and tickles the nose.

CHEF

Have some more. It goes well with the pate fois gras.

YOUNG WOMAN

I don't know if I should. I might drink too much.

LAWYER

Don’t worry Marie – Eve we will look after you.

MATA HARI

That’s right dear … he can look after you …

There is a slight edge to her voice. George gives her the eye. She teases him back without Marie-eve noticing. She is too busy hungrily tasting the different food.

CHEF

And for dessert I have brought a Pavlova.

YOUNG WOMAN

A Pavlova! Really .. a Pavlova!

CHEF

Yes … have you never had a Pavlova?

YOUNG WOMAN

No I have never tasted one ... but I have heard of it!

George and Mata Hari look at each other in surprise.

MATA HARI

Well Philip … better slice her a big piece.

YOUNG WOMAN

Really Madame! Oh I love you.

She gives Mata Hari a big hug and then watches as the Chef cut her a piece.

She eyes the cake hungrily and he moves the knife over and cuts her a bigger piece.

He sets the plate before her and she eats it rapidly to begin with and then remembers her manners and slows and begins to eat the cake daintily.

George places his hand on her shoulder. She stops and looks up at him.

GEORGE

Don’t worry my little one … there is another piece waiting for you.

THE SPIRIT BOARD INT NIGHT

MATA HARI turns to the Chef.

MATA HARI

Did you bring it?

CHEF

Oui Madame.

GEORGE

Margaretha … No …

MATA HARI

Yes … George

GEORGE

… you don't Really believe in that nonsense do you?

MATA HARI

What if I do?

The Chef pulls a object wrapped in pink paper and a lovely bow from the basket.

GEORGE

Philip … how could you?

CHEF

In her note … Madame was adamant!

MATA HARI

Here George … have some more champagne … it will calm your nerves

She pours him a glass and spills champagne all over him.

MATA HARI

Oh George … I am so sorry. How clumsy of me.

GEORGE

Look what you have done. I will have to go and change.

MATA HARI

You brought a change of clothes.

GEORGE

Yes Mata Hari … you can't wear evening clothes in the morning … it is just not done.

MATA HARI

George! Somehow I don't think they will care what you are wearing ...

GEORGE

Oh … Margharite …Mon Dieu … I am sorry.

MATA HARI

They will be looking at me.

GEORGE

Many pardons ....

George realizes he has hurt her feelings but decides not to say anything more.

MATA HARI

By all means George … go … and change.

She waves her hands and dismisses him. He bows solemnly to Mata Hari and just as he is about to turn and leave notices the young woman and bows to take his leave from her as well.

The Chef unwraps and lays the object on the table. It is a Ouija or spirit board. The young woman takes an interest and moves her fingers across the object

YOUNG WOMAN

What is it Madame?

MATA HARI

In Sumatra it's known as a semangat papan.

The young woman looks puzzled.

MATA HARI

It’s a spirit board.

CHEF

You use it to talk to spirits … mademoiselle … those who live beyond the grave.

The young woman draws her hand to her mouth and is frightened.

MATA HARI

I use the spirit board to talk to my son and daughter.

MATA HARI

Don’t worry my dear … the spirits will only come to you if you summon them.

The chef sits before the Ouija board, cups his hand in a circle and closes his eyes. He begins to move his hands around the board. The Young Girl is fascinated!

MATA HARI

Read the letters.

Mata Hari points to the board …

YOUNG WOMAN

M … A … M … A … MAMA!

The young woman screams she is terrified. The Chef jumps at her scream. His concentration is broken. He stops

MATA HARI

Marie-Eve … my dear girl … don't be scared!

YOUNG WOMAN

But … I am …

MATA HARI

Try to be brave …

YOUNG WOMAN

I will try …

MATA HARI

Philip … Shall we continue?

CHEF

Oui Madame … let us …

He once again closes his eyes and cups his hands and they begin to move across the board.

YOUNG WOMAN

W … H … E … R … E … A … R … E … Y … O…U ... Where are you?

Mata Hari looks up as she speaks.

MATA HARI

Here my dears …

Mata Hari sobs …

MATA HARI

Soon I will be joining you ... very soon …

The young woman takes here eyes off the board for a minute and toches Mata Hari's hand.

YOUNG WOMAN

W… E … M ….I … S … S … Y… O …U … M … A … M … A …. We miss you Mama!

MATA HARI

I miss you both too … very much.

There is a soft girl's voice in the background …

YOUNG WOMAN

Wear something nice … Mama …

The Chef stops and opens his eyes. He stares at the young woman. The young woman is petrified. She spoke but in another person's voice.

MATA HARI

That was my daughter's voice!

YOUNG WOMAN

That was not me speaking Madame!

CHEF

We know. That was her daughter. You were channelling for her.

MATA HARI

This has never happened before with my children. They must be close.

CHEF

Yes Mata Hari … they must be very close.

The Chef closes his eyes and continues.

MATA HARI

W … E … W … I… L … L … B…E … T…H… E…R …E ..

YOUNG WOMAN

We will be there.

MATA HARI

Y … O … U … A … R … E … N … O … T … A … L … O … N … E …

YOUNG WOMAN

You are not alone.

Mata Hari buries her head in her hands and starts to cry. The Chef stops.

THE WISH INT NIGHT

The door opens and the Lawyer appears at the door. He is dressed in a sombre grey suit.

GEORGE

Now look what you've done!

Mata Hari looks up. Her mascara has smudged and she looks devastated.

The lawyer rushes across the room to console her.

GEORGE

My dear Margharite.

Mata Hari brushes him aside and starts to laugh hysterically. The Chef is wrapping the Spirit Board and putting it away. He also starts to pack the rest of the dinner back into the basket.

GEORGE

She's mad … quite mad. I must get them to stop this. They cannot execute a mad woman, not even in wartime!

MATA HARI

Stop George … I am not crazy … I am happy.

GEORGE

Happy!

MATA HARI

My one great wish is to be fulfilled.

YOUNG WOMAN

What wish is that Madame?

MATA HARI

Soon I will see my son and daughter again.

The young woman gives Mata Hari a big hug. Mata Hari looks at the Lawyer and then at the young woman as she is being hugged.

MATA HARI

Marie-Eve … can I ask you something?

YOUNG WOMAN

You may ask me anything you want Madame.

MATA HARI

If you had one wish what would it be?

YOUNG WOMAN

If I had one wish what would I wish?

LAWYER

Yes … one wish and only one.

Marie-Eve gets up off of Mata Hari's lap and starts to dance around the room.

YOUNG WOMAN

I wish I could live in Paris … the city of lights … and to dance on the stage, and to drink champagne every night and have Pavlova for dessert every night.

LAWYER

That's too many wishes. Besides if you had Pavlova every night you would be plump in no time …

MATA HARI

To live in Paris is an expectation … George … the others are the wishes. Don't you agree Philip?

CHEF

Yes Miss … every one expects to one day live in Paris. Not everyone can hope to dance on the stage, drink champagne and get plump on Pavlova.

MATA HARI

And dine in your restaurant, n'est ce pas?

Mata Hari leans over to George

MATA HARI

George dearest …

LAWYER

Yes Margeretha.

MATA HARI

Why don't you take her with you?

LAWYER

What!

MATA HARI

Take her back to Paris

The young woman stops dancing. Her eyes are as wide as saucers. She is short of breath and excited.

YOUNG WOMAN

Can you do that?

LAWYER

Well …

The young woman walks over and pleadingly tugs on his lapel.

YOUNG WOMAN

Please … will you do that sir?

MATA HARI

Can't you see she needs to leave? She is no longer a child. She has so much to see, so much to do … so much to experience for the first time.

CHEF

Who wouldn't want to leave this grey and dismal place?

Mata Hari turns to Philip. Hoping to play both ends against the middle.

MATA HARI

Philip … will you take her with you? She can work as a server in your restaurant.

CHEF

Yes .. I could … but how do we get her out.

The young woman looks around and then rushes over to the trunk

YOUNG WOMAN

I can hide in your trunk Madame and they can carry me out of here.

She rushes over and gives Philip a hug. They look at each other in amusement.

LAWYER

Well Philip?

CHEF

I have done worst.

MATA HARI

I imagine you both have.

The two men carefully lift the young woman into the trunk. Mata Hari walks over and kisses her on the forehead.

MATA HARI

You will have to be very quiet and very still.

The young woman gives her an adoring hug.

MATA HARI

Merci Madame pour tout. You are a saint.

MATA HARI

And you are my angel. Live a long and happy life.

Mata Hari gives her a second kiss, this time on the lips.

MATA HARI

And remember me …

The young woman disappears into the trunk and then suddenly reappears.

YOUNG WOMAN

The cake .. can I take the Pavlova with me?

The chef hands her the cake.

CHEF

I thought mademoiselle might ….

The young woman disappears a second time into the trunk the two men close and latch the trunk.

MATA HARI

Philip I know I can trust … you George … you be nice.

The Chef bangs on the door and the door swings open and the two guards appear.

OLD GUARD

It is time for you to pack up and leave.

CHEF

Time for me to go Miss.

MATA HARI

Thank you so much Philip. It was nice to see you one last time.

CHEF

I shall make a dish and name it in your honour. Only the finest will be allowed to partake in the Mata Hari.

MATA HARI

A dessert Philip?

CHEF

No miss …

He starts to cry

CHEF

The main course … something succulent and fresh … uplifting and spicy at the same time.

The old guard starts to push the chef to the door with the butt of his rifle.

OLD GUARD

> You must be off before the Colonel arrives. He doesn't know you are here.

LAWYER

> Philip … tell my chauffeur to drive you and Mata Hari's trunk back to Paris and ask him to return this morning for me.

The chef nods at the Lawyer.

CHEF

> A Dieu … to God …. Mata Hari …

Mata Hari blows him a kiss. He reciprocates. The young guard uses his rifle to push the chef out of the room.

The old guard searches the room, stopping at the trunk. He inspects the latches … there is a pink ribbon from the girl's dress that is

streaming outside the trunk. He tugs at it. The ribbon disappears into the trunk … as he looks at it.

OLD GUARD

Where is the young woman that was here helping you?

LAWYER

She seems to have vanished. She did not want to stay here any longer ...

The young guard returns. The old guard eyes the Lawyer and Mata Hari suspiciously but does nothing. He waves at the younger guard in exasperation.

OLD GUARD

We are to take away the trunk now.

LAWYER

It can go in the back of my car. My Chauffeur will look after the trunk.

The two soldiers pick up the trunk.

YOUNG GUARD

It's so much heavier … don't you think.

OLD GUARD

Stop complaining … you young people … all you try to do is escape your responsibilities.

As the guard says this he looks at Mata Hari. She rushes over to him and kisses him on the cheek.

OLD GUARD

I may be old … Madame but I am not stupid. No one deserves this …

The Old Guard looks around at the room. They trudge off with the trunk, leaving the Lawyer and Mata Hari alone. The door to the cell is left ajar.

LAWYER

We can try to escape?

MATA HARI

Save Marie-Eve … I am beyond saving. Why did he let Marie – Eve escape?

LAWYER

The Colonel doesn't know about Philip and the food!

MATA HARI

What! How did you arrange it then?

LAWYER

Philip bribed the old guard … paid him off …

MATA HARI

Really … for a Chef he's clever … how much?

LAWYER

Its not about being clever. He knows how to keep his restaurant well provisioned even in wartime.   How much … 1,000 American dollars ...

MATA HARI

A thousand American dollars … I would have to dance six months to get that … how did Philip manage that?

LAWYER

The American officers are coming to his restaurant each night in numbers, flush with cash and Philip insists they pay him in American dollars.

MATA HARI

Maybe the Americans will be France's saviours after all … and maybe I should have gone into business with Philip … instead of taking up dancing.

LAWYER

Me … I might give up my day job!

MATA HARI

Promise me the two of you will look after Marie – Eve. Or I will come back to haunt you in your nightmares.

She wags her finger sternly at the Lawyer. George nods solemnly.

ABSOLUTION INT NIGHT

Dawn is breaking. In the background is heard a rooster crowing.

There is the sound of marching soldiers.   A line of cars can be heard approaching.

The door to the cell opens and in enters an old French Priest carrying a rosary and a black bible. He makes the sign of the cross.

PRIEST

I have been sent to comfort you. Dawn is upon us.

MATA HARI

Not you too …

PRIEST

What my child?

LAWYER

Margaretha behave yourself.

MATA HARI

Why … George?

LAWYER

All that is left is precious minutes … and what they will remember you by.

MATA HARI

I want to be remembered for who I really am … and not what they say I am.

PRIEST

I have come to hear your confession, nothing more.

MATA HARI

I have nothing to confess.

PRIEST

Surely you have sinned.

MATA HARI

I am innocent.

PRIEST

The condemned always say they are innocent.

LAWYER

If she is guilty of anything it is having trusted the officers of la Republique and everything they represent.

PRIEST

Confess your sins … my child.

MATA HARI

I am not of your loins … don’t call me child.

PRIEST

We are all children of God.

MATA HARI

I am without blame.

PRIEST

Everyone is born with original sin.

MATA HARI

Even you father?

PRIEST

Yes, even me.

MATA HARI

Even the officers of the court martial

PRIEST

Yes …

LAWYER

Father, the next time they come to confess their sins … tell them they have added calculated and cold-blooded murder to all their other sins. Mata Hari is innocent.

PRIEST

Only God knows that for certain …

MATA HARI

In a few minutes … father I will ask him myself.

PRIEST

You have lived a life in iniquity Margaretha.

MATA HARI

I have been myself … and done what I have needed to do.

PRIEST

You have been a temptress of men … I am told.

MATA HARI

Was it wrong to bare my body?

PRIEST

It was.

MATA HARI

Why … Am I not made in God's image?

PRIEST

That is what the scriptures say.

She unbuttons the front of her blouse and bares her bodice to the Priest. The Priest makes the sign of the cross.

MATA HARI

In a few short minutes God's perfection will be torn apart by you men.

Mata Hari starts to cry uncontrollaby. The Lawyer rushed to cover and console her.

The priest turns his back and starts to read his bible.

It takes a few minutes for Mata Hari to regain her composure. She buttons herself up and sets things right.

PRIEST

If you will not confess your sins … then let me at least bless you Margaretha.

MATA HARI

Why … Why should I let you bless me?

PRIEST

So that you can be buried on sacred grounds. I will make sure of that.

Mata Hari slowly kneels and the Priest prays over her in Latin. He recites the last rights.

When he is finished he places the rosary around her neck and places his hand on her head.

PRIEST

Pax Vobiscum … my child.

The Priest turns and leaves the cell.

EXIT INT DAWN

A moment after the Priest leaves the door swings open one final time and in marches a French Colonel followed by two young guards. The two guards remain just outside the door and peer curiously in.

COLONEL

It is time.

The Lawyer steps forth and stands between Mata Hari and the Colonel.

LAWYER

Colonel I plead to you to postpone this travesty of justice.

COLONEL

I cannot do this sir.

LAWYER

You are putting an innocent woman to death

COLONEL

I have the proper warrants and orders for her execution here in my pocket.

LAWYER

You are following a wrongful order Colonel.

COLONEL

The order is signed and sealed by the President of France himself.

MATA HARI

…. The old goat …

COLONEL

Pardon?

George rushes agitatedly towards the Colonel.

LAWYER

Yes … give her a pardon!

COLONEL

What are you talking about man! Stand out of the way or I shall shoot you

In response, the Colonel steps back, draws his pistol, cocks it and points it at George.

MATA HARI

Better do as he says George …

LAWYER

But Margaretha …

MATA HARI

I don't want your blood on my hands. Put that away Colonel … that will be unnecessary. There are enough bullets waiting outside.

George stands paralysed.

The Colonel slowly puts away his pistol and walks around the Lawyer and approaches Mata Hari..

Mata Hari walks over to the cot, picks up her hat and puts it on. She turns to the Colonel.

MATA HARI

I am ready …

COLONEL

We must go … Madame … they are waiting.

The Colonel directs her to the door with his hand. She walks slowly over to George and kisses him on the cheek. He is crying …

Mata Hari walks to the door, pauses at the door for a second and without turning back she says her last words to George

MATA HARI

I have always loved you George … you know that … Look after Marie – Eve … She will be our redemption.

She straightens herself up and regally exits one guard before her one guard behind her. The Colonel follows behind them all.

George remains behind … weeping uncontrollably.

EXECUTION INT DAWN

In the background is heard some orders. There is scuffling outside the window and some latin scripture being read.

Then a few bars of the Marseilles is played. Then a clear voice.

COLONEL

Any last words Madame?

MATA HARI

I am Mata Hari … Eye of the Dawn!

Ten footsteps are heard to trail off in the distance. A brief drum roll and then a volley of loud shot. The wall behind the cots lets loose with some dust.

George winces. Smoke drifts in through the window.

A moment later there is the single retort of a pistol. He winces a second time and slowly crumbles to the floor and cries in anguish

LAWYER

Mon Dieu … my dear MATA HARI … what have they done?

FADE TO BLACK

A Message …for all who believe in Pop Culture …



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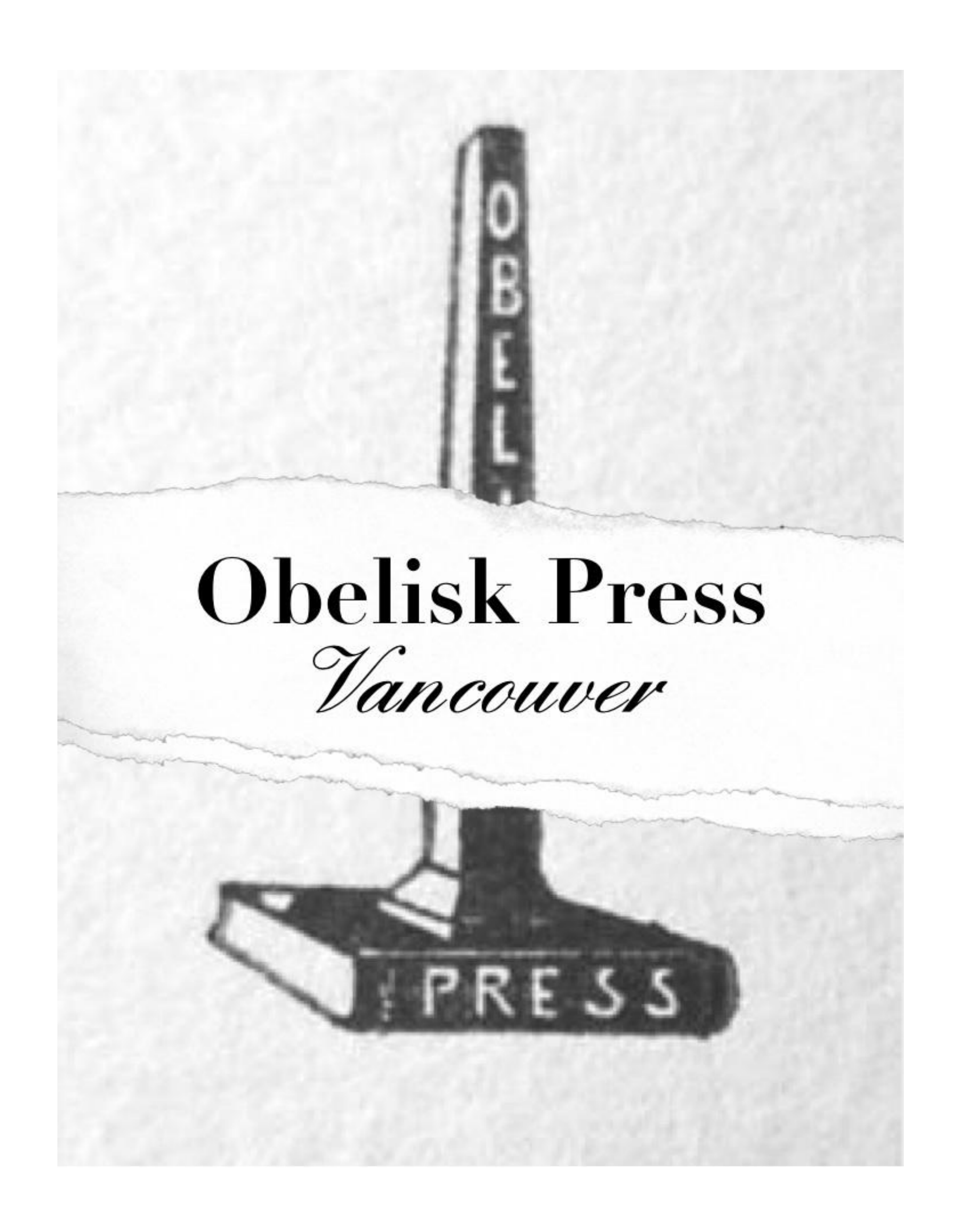
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